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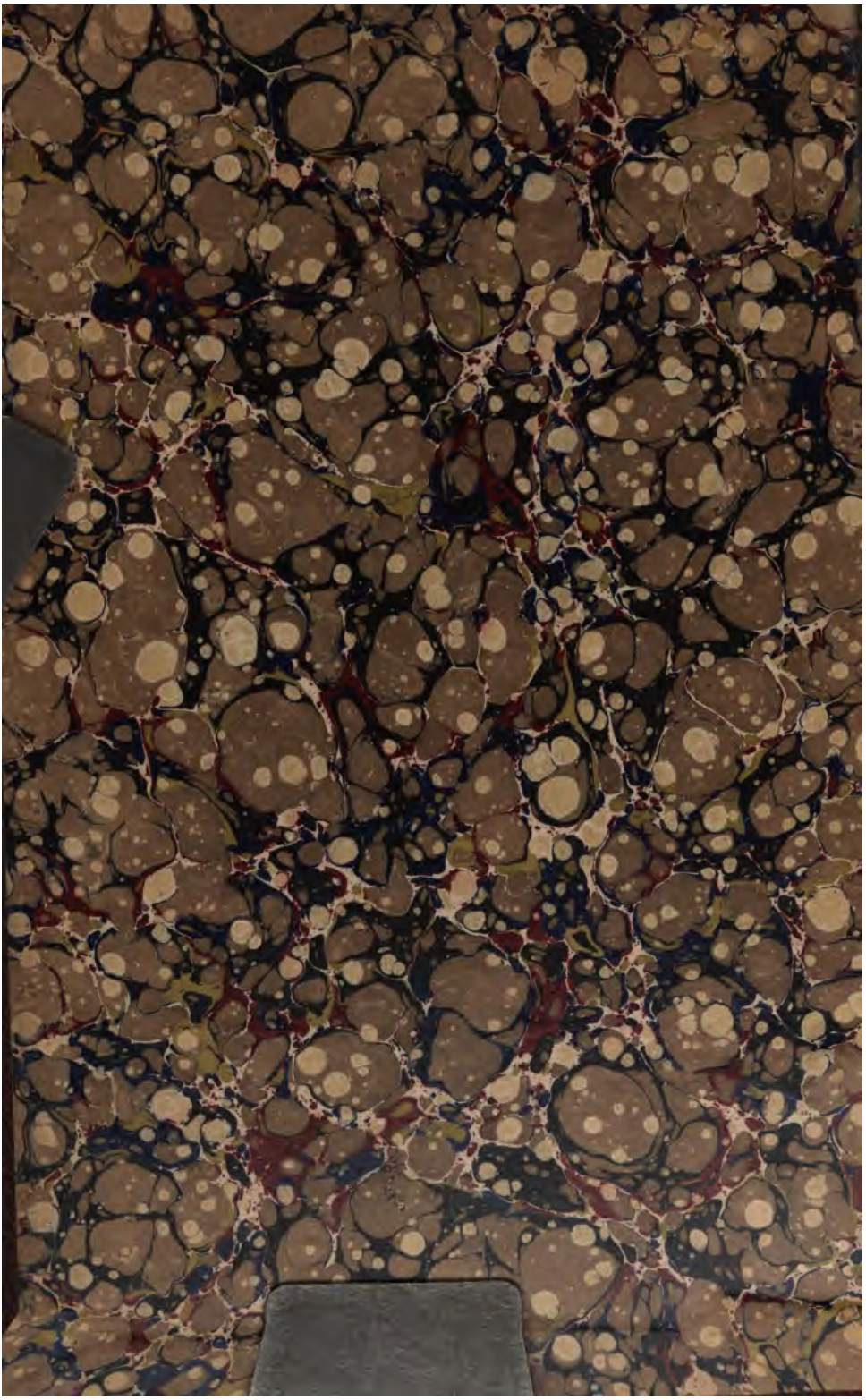

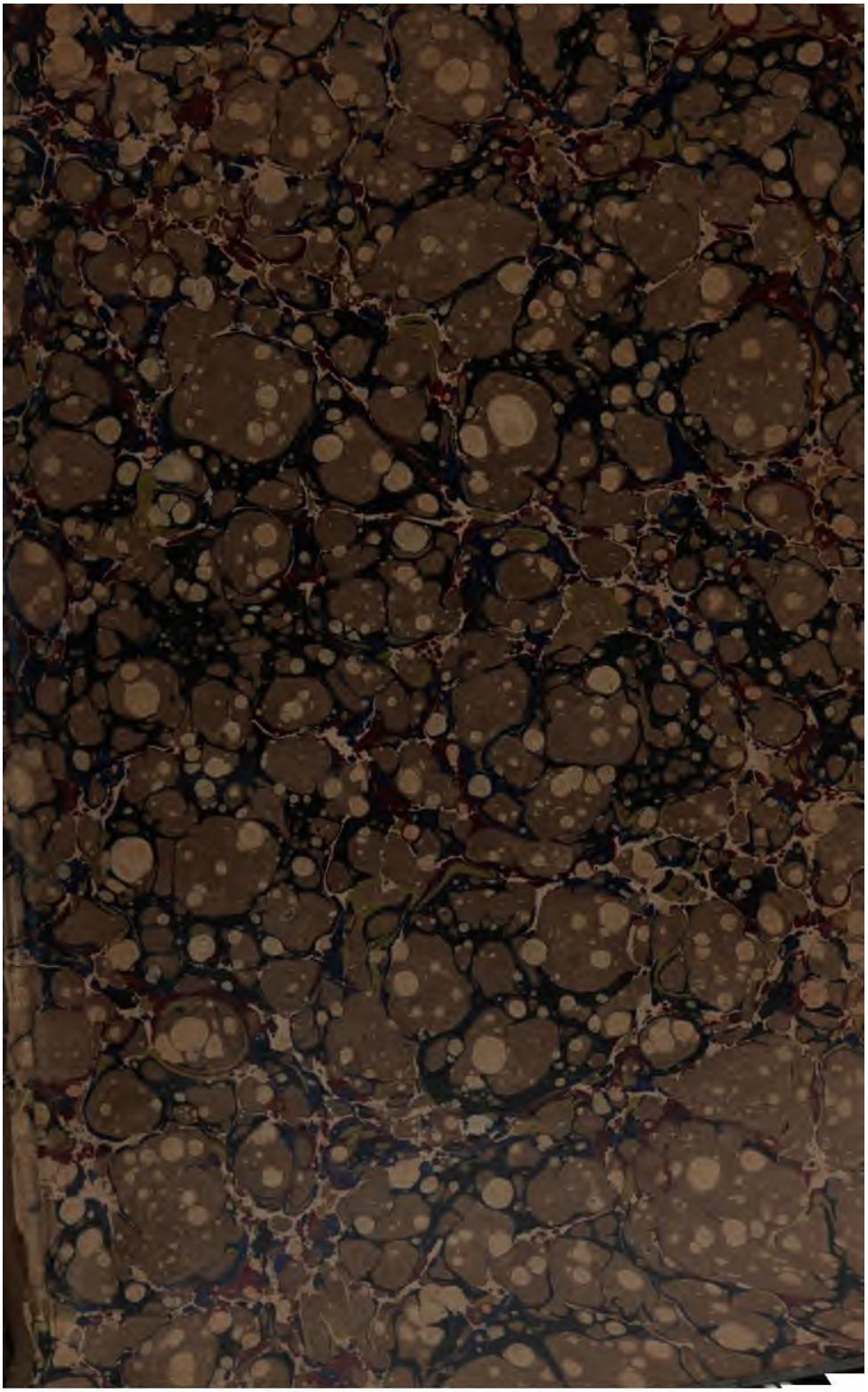

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Caxton's

Book of Curtesye.

Early English Text Society.
Extra Series. No. III.
1868

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Caxton's

Book of Curtesye,

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AND NOW REPRINTED,

WITH TWO MS. COPIES OF THE SAME TREATISE, FROM THE ORIEL MS. 79, AND THE BALLIOL MS. 354.

EDITED BY

FREDERICK J. FURNIVALL, M.A.

EDITOR OF 'THE BABEES BOOK, ETC.' ('MANNERS AND MEALS IN OLDEN TIME'), ETC. ETC.

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PREFACE.

THOUGH no excuse can be needed for including in our Extra Series a reprint of a unique Caxton on a most interesting subject, yet this Book of Curtesye from Hill's MS. was at first intended for our original series, I having forgotten lately that Caxton had written to 'lytyl Iohn,' though some months back I had entered the old printer's book for my second collection of Manners and Meals tracts for the Society. After the copy of Hill—which Mr W. W. King kindly made for his fellow-members—had gone to press, Mr Hazlitt reminded me of the Caxton, and its first and last lines in Mr Blades's admirable book showed that Hill's text was the same as the printed one. I accordingly went to Cambridge to copy it, and there, before tea, Mr Skeat showed me the copy of *The Vision of Piers Plowman* which the Provost and Fellows of Oriel had been good enough to lend him for his edition of 'Text B.' Having enjoyed the vellum Vision, I turned to the paper leaves at its end, and what should they contain but an earlier and better version of the Caxton that I had just copied part of?[1] I drank seven cups of tea, and eat five or six large slices of bread and butter, in honour of the event;[2] and Mr Skeat, with his never-

[1] Mr Bradshaw was kind enough to copy the rest, and to read the whole of the proof with Caxton's original.

[2] I must be excused for not having found the poem before, as it is not in the Index to Mr Coxe's Catalogue. In the body of the work it is entered as "A father's advice to his son; with instructions for his behaviour as a king's or nobleman's page. ff. 88, 89, 78. Beg.

Kepeth clene and leseth not youre gere."

failing kindness, undertook to copy and edit the Oriel text for the Society. With three texts, therefore, in hand, I could not well stick them at the end of the Postscript to the *Babees Book*, &c.,[1] and as I wanted Caxton's name to this Book of Curtesye to distinguish it from what has long been to me THE Book of Courtesy,—that from the Sloane MS. 1986, edited by Mr Halliwell for the Percy Society, and by me for our own E. E. T. S.—and as also Caxton's name is one 'to conjure withal,' I have, with our Committee's leave, made this little volume an Extra Series one, and called it Caxton's, though his text is not so good as that of the Oriel MS.

On this latter point Mr Skeat writes:

"The Oriel copy is evidently the best. Not only does it give better readings, but the lines, as a rule, run more smoothly; and it has an extra stanza. This stanza, which is marked 54, occurs between stanzas 53 and 54 of the other copies, and is of some interest and importance. It shows that Lidgate's pupil, put in mind of Lidgate's style by the very mention of his name, introduces a ballad of three stanzas, in which every stanza has a burden after the Lidgate manner. The recurrence of this burden no doubt caused copyists to lose their place, and so the stanza came to be omitted in other copies. Its omission, however, spoils the ballad. Both it and the curious lines in Piers Ploughmans Crede,

> For aungells and arcangells · all þei whijt vseþ
> And alle aldermen · þat ben *ante tronum*,

i. e. all the elders before the throne, allude to Rev. iv. 10. This Crede passage has special reference to the *Carmelites* or *White* Friars.

"The first two leaves of the Oriel copy are misplaced inside out at the end; but this is not the only misarrangement. The poem has evidently been copied into this MS. from an older copy having a leaf capable of containing *six stanzas at a time;* which leaves were out of order. Hence the poem in the Oriel MS. is written in the following order, as now bound up, Stanzas 11 (l. 5)—18, 25—30, 37—42, 19—24, 49—54, 31—36, 43—48, 55—76, 8—11 (l. 4), 4 (l. 5)—7, 1—4 (l. 4)."

[1] The Treatises in *The Babees Book*, &c., and the Index at the end, should be consulted for parallel and illustrative passages to those in Caxton's text.

As an instance of a word improved by the Oriel text, may be cited the '*brecheles* feste' of Caxton's and Hill's texts, l. 66, and l. 300,

> ffor truste ye well ye shall you not excuse
> ffrom *brecheles feste*, & I may you espye
> Playenge at any game of rebawdrye.—*Hill*, l. 299—301.

Could it be 'profitless,' from A.-Sax. *bréc*, gain, profit; or 'breechless,' a feast of birch for the boy with his breeches off? The latter was evidently meant, but it was a forced construction. The Oriel *byrcheley* set matters right at once.

Another passage I cannot feel sure is set at rest by the Oriel text. Hill's and Caxton's texts, when describing the ill-mannered servant whose ways are to be avoided, say of him, as to his hair, that he is

> Absolon with disheveled heres smale,
> lyke to a prysoner of saynt Malowes,[1]
> *a sonny busshe able to the galowes.*—*Hill*, l. 462.

For the last line the Oriel MS. reads,

> *a sonny bush myght cause hym to goo louse,*

and Mr Skeat says,—"This is clearly the right reading, of which *galowes* is an unmeaning corruption. The poet is speaking of the *dirty* state of a bad and ill-behaved servant. He is as dirty as a man come out of St Malo's prison; a sunny bush would cause him to go and free himself from minute attendants. A 'sunny bush' probably means no more than a warm nook, inviting one to rest, or to such quiet pursuits as the one indicated. That this is really the reading is shown by the next stanza, wherein the poet apologizes for having spoken too bluntly; he ought to have spoken of such a chase by saying that he goes *a-hawking* or *a-hunting*. Such was the right euphemism required by 'norture.'"

If this is the meaning, we may compare with it the old poet's reproof to the proud man:

[1] An allusion to the strong castle built at St Malo's by Anne, Duchess of Bretayne.—Dyce.

Man, of þi schuldres and of þi side
þou miȝte hunti luse and flee:
of such a park i ne hold no pride;
þe dere nis nauȝte þat þou mighte sle.
Early English Poems, ed. F. J. F., 1862, p. 1, l. 5.

and remember that one of the blessings of the early Paradisaical *Land of Cokaygne* is:

Nis þer flei, fle, no lowse,
In cloþ, in toune, bed, no house.
Ib., p. 157, l. 37-8.

We may also compare the following extract about Homer's death from "Pleasant and Delightfull Dialogues in Spanish and English: Profitable to the Learner, and not vnpleasant to any other Reader. By *John Minsheu*, Professor of Languages in London. 1623," p. 47.

"F... a foole with his foolishnesse framed in his owne imagination may giue to a hundred wise men matter to picke out.

"I, So it hapned to the Poet Homer, that as he was with age blinde, and went walking by the sea shoare, & heard certaine Fishermen talking, that at that time were a *lowsing* themselues, and as he asked them, what fish they caught, they vnderstanding that he had meant their lice, they answered, Those that we [1] haue, we seeke for, and those that we [2] haue not wee finde, but as the good Homer could not see what they did, and for this cause could not vnderstand the riddle, it did so grieue his vnderstanding to obtaine the secret of this matter, which was a sufficient griefe to cause his death."

But the subject is not a very pleasant one for discussion, though the occupation alluded to in the Oriel Text must have been one of the pastimes of many people in Early England.

The book itself, *Lytill Johan*, is by a disciple of Lydgate's—see l. 366, p. 36-7—and contains, besides, the usual directions how to dress, how to behave in church, at meals, and when serving at table, a wise man's advice on the books his little Jack should read, the best English poets,—then Gower, Chaucer, Occleve, and Lydgate,—not the Catechism and Latin Grammar. It was very pleasant to come

[1] i. Haue in their clothes, i. lice. [2] i. Haue not in hand.

off the directions not to conveye spetell over the table, or burnish one's bones with one's teeth, to the burst of enthusiasm with which the writer speaks of our old poets. He evidently believed in them with all his heart; and it would have been a good thing for England if our educators since had followed his example. If the time wasted, almost, in Latin and Greek by so many middle-class boys, had been given to Milton and Shakspere, Chaucer and Langland, with a fit amount of natural science, we should have been a nobler nation now than we are. There is no more promising sign of the times than the increased attention paid to English in education now.

But to return to our author. He gives Chaucer the poet's highest gift, Imagination, in these words,

> what ever to say he toke in his entente,
> his langage was so fayer & pertynante,
> yt semeth vnto manys heryng
> *not only the worde, but veryly the thyng.* (l. 343.)

And though the writer has the bad taste to praise Lydgate more than Chaucer, yet we may put this down to his love for his old master, and may rest assured that though the cantankerous Ritson calls the Bury schoolmaster a 'driveling monk,' yet the larking schoolboy who robbed orchards, played truant, and generally raised the devil in his early days (*Forewords to Babees Book*, p. xliv.), retained in later years many of the qualities that draw to a man the boy's bright heart, the disciple's fond regret. We too will therefore hope that old Lydgate's

> sowle be gon
> (To) the sterred paleys above the dappled skye,
> Ther to syng *Sanctus* insessavntly
> Emonge the mvses nyne celestyall,
> Before the hyeste Iubyter of all. (l. 381-5.)

In old age the present poem was composed (st. 60, p. 42-3); 'a lytill newe Instruccion' to a lytle childe, to remove him from vice & make him follow virtue. At his riper age our author promises his boy the surplusage of the treatise (st. 74, p. 50-1); and if a copy of it exists, I hope it will soon fall in our way and get into type, for 'the more the merrier' of these peeps into old boy-life.

On one of the grammatical forms of the Oriel MS., Mr Skeat writes:

"It is curious to observe the forms of the imperative mood plural which occur so frequently throughout the poem in the Oriel copy. The forms ending in *-eth* are about 31 in number, of which 17 are of French, and 14 of A.S. origin. The words in which the ending *-eth* is dropped are 42, of which 18 are of French, and 24 of A.S. origin. The three following French words take *both* forms; *avyse* or *avyseth*, *awayte* or *awayteth*, *wayte* or *wayteth*; and the five following A.S. words, *be* or *beth*, *kepe* or *kepeth*, *knele* or *knelyth*, *loke* or *loketh*, *make* or *maketh*. Thus the poet makes use, on the whole, of one form almost as often as the other (that is, supposing the scribe to have copied correctly), and he no doubt consulted his convenience in taking that one which suited the line best. It is an instance of what followed in almost every case of naturalization, that A.S. inflections were added to the French words quite as freely as to those of native origin. Both the *-eth* and *-e* forms are commonly used without the word *ye*, though *Be ye* occurs in l. 58. In the phrase *avise you* (l. 78), *you* is in the accusative."

Commenting also on l. 71 of Caxton and Hill, Mr Skeat notices how they have individualised the general 'child' of the earlier Oriel text:

"71. Here we find *child* riming to *mylde*. In most other places it is *Johan*. The rime shows that the reading *child* is right, and *Johan* is a later adaptation. The Oriel MS. never uses the word *Johan* at all; it is always *child*."

I may remark also, that on the question lately raised by Mr Bradshaw, 'who before Hampole,[1] or after him, used *you* for the nominative as well as the correct *ye*,' Hill uses both *you* and *ye*, see l. 47, 51, 52, &c., though so far as a hasty search shows, Lydgate, in his Minor Poems at least, uses *ye* only, as do Lord Berners in his *Arthur of Lytil Brytayne*, ab. 1530, the Ormulum, Ancren Riwle, Genesis and Exodus, William of Palerne, Alliterative Poems, Early Metrical Homilies, &c.[2]

[1] *Pricke of Conscience*, p. 127, l. 4659; and p. xvii.

[2] Mr Skeat holds that in the various reading *3ow drieth* from the Univ. Coll.

The final *d*, *f*, *t*, of Hill's MS., often have a tag to them. As they sometimes occur in places where I judge they must mean nothing, I have neglected them all. Every final *ll* has a line through it, which may mean *e*. Nearly every final *n* and *m* has a curly tail or line over it. This is printed *e* or ñ, though no doubt the tail and line have often no value at all. The curls to the *r*s are printed *e*, because *ther* with the curly *r*, in l. 521, Hill, rimes to *where* of l. 519.

At the end of Caxton's final *d* and *g* is occasionally a crook-backed line, something between the line of beauty and the ordinary knocker. This no doubt represents the final *e* of MSS., and is so printed, as Mr Childs has not the knocker in the fount of type that he uses for the Society's work. Caxton's ñ stands for *un* in the *-aunce*, *-aunte*, of words from the French. No stops or inverted commas have been put to Caxton's text here, but the stanzas and lines have been numbered, and side-notes added.

"The *Book of Curtesye*," says Mr Bradshaw, "is known from three early editions. The first, without any imprint, but printed at Westminster by Caxton ab. 1477-78,[1] the only known copy of which is here reproduced. The second (with the colophon 'Here endeth a lytyll treatyse called the booke of Curtesye or lytyll John. Emprynted atte Westmoster') is only known from a printer's proof of two pages[2] preserved among the Douce fragments in the Bodleian. It must have been printed by Wynkin de Worde in Caxton's house ab. 1492. In the third edition it was reprinted at the end of the *Stans puer ad Mensam* by Wynkin de Worde ab. 1501-1510. The Cambridge copy is the only one known to remain of this edition."

I have no more to say: but, readers, remember this coming New Year to do more than last for what Dr Stratmann calls "the dear Old English." Think of Chaucer when his glad spring comes, and

Oxford MS. (of the early part of the 15th century) to the Vernon MS. *þou druȝest*, l. 25, Passus 1, of the Vision of Piers Plowman, the ȝow is an accusative, "exactly equivalent to the Gothic in the following passage—'*hwana* þaursjai; gaggai du mis, i. e. *whom* it may thirst, let him come to me.' John vii. 37. I conclude that *ȝow* is accusative, not dative. The same construction occurs in German constantly, '*es dürstet mich*' = it thirsts me, I thirst."

[1] In his type No. 2, *Blades*, ii. 63.

[2] In Caxton's type No. 5, *Blades*, ii. 235 (not 253 as in Index).

every day besides; forget not Langland or any of our early men;

reporte
& revyue *th*e lawde of the*m* tha*t* were
famovs i*n*[1] owr*e* langage, these faders dere,
whos sowles i*n* blis, god et*er*nall avaunce,
*th*at lysten so[2] owr*e* langage to enhavnce!

(*Hill*, l. 430-4.)

3, *St George's Square, N.W.*
15 *Dec.*, 1867.

[1] Founders of, *Oriel* MS. [2] some, *Hill*; so, *Oriel*.

The Book of Curtesye.

[The Book of Curtesy.]

[*From the Oriel MS. lxxix.*]

[1]

Lytle childe, sythen youre tendre infancie
Stondeth as yett vndir yndyff[e]rence,
To vice or vertu to moven [1] or Applie,
And in suche Age ther is no prouidence,
Ne comenly no sadde intelligence,
But ryght as wax receyueth printe and figure,
So chylder ben disposed of nature,

[2]

Vice or vertu to Folowe and ympresse
In mynde; and therfore, to stere and remeve
You from vice, and to vertu thou[2] dresse,
That on to folow, and the other to eschewe,
I haue devysed you this lytill newe
Instruccion according to youre age,
Playne in sentence, but playner in langage.

[1] MS. morven.

[2] *Read* you.

(*Richard Hill's Commonplace Book, or Balliol MS.* 354, *ff C lx.*)

Here begynnyth lytiłł Iohan.

Lytełł Iohan, sith your tendere enfancye
Stondyth as yet vndere Indyfference
To vyce or vertu to mevyn or applie,
& in suche age *ther* [1] ys no *pro*vydence,
Ne come*n*ly no sage Intelygence,
But as wax receyvith prynt or fygure,
So chyldren bene disposed of nature

[*Hill's Text.*]

[1] The *th* is the same as the *y*.

[The Book of Curtesye.]

[*Caxton's Text.*]

[1]

ytyl Iohn syth your tendre enfancye
Stondeth as yet vnder / in difference
To vice or vertu to meuyn or applye
And in suche age ther is no prouidence
Ne comenly no sade Intelligence
But as waxe resseyueth prynte or figure
So children ben disposide of nature

[Leaf 1 *a*.]
As Infancy is indifferent whether it follows vice or virtue,

[2]

Vyce or vertue to folowe ande enpresse
In mynde / ande therfore / to styre & remeue
You from vice / ande to vertue addresse
That one to folowe / and that other teschewe
I haue deuysed you / this lytyl newe
Instruccion / acordynge vnto your age
Playne in sentence / but playner in langage

I have written this new treatise to draw you from vice, and turn you to virtue.

[*Hill's Text.*]

¶ Vyce or vertu to folowe, & enpresse
In mynde; & *ther*for to styre & remeve
you frome vice, & to vertu addresse,
That on to folow, & *that other* to eschewe,
I haue devysed you this lytill newe
Instruccion[1] accordyng vnto your age,
playn In sentence, but playnere In langage.

[1] The mark of contraction is over the *n* : t. i. the *n* has its tail curled over its back like a dog's.

[3]

Taketh hede therfore and herkyn what I say,
And yeueth therto hooly youre aduertence,
Lette not youre eye be here and youre hert away,
But yeueth herto youre besy diligence,
And ley aparte alle wantawne insolence,
Lernyth to be vertues and well thewid;
Who wolle not lere, nedely must be lewid.

[4]

Afore all thyng, fyrst and principally,
In the morowe when ye[1] shall vppe ryse,
To wyrship god haue in youre memorie;
Wyth cristis crosse loke ye blesse you thriese,
Youre pater-nosteir seyth in devoute wyse,
Aue maria wyth the holy crede,
Than alle the after the bettir may ye spede.

[1] MS. he.

[5]

And while ye be Abouten honestely
To dresse youre-self and don on youre aray,
Wyth youre felawe well and tretably
Oure lady matens Avyseth that you say,
And this obseruaunce vseth euery day,
Wyth prime and owris, and wythouten drede
The blyssed lady woll graunte you youre mede.

[*Hill's Text.*]

¶ Take hede *ther*for, & harken what I saye,
& geve *ther*to yowre good advertence,
lette not *your* ere be here, & *your* herte awaye,
But pute you *ther*to besy delygence,
Laying a-*parte* all wanton Insolence,
lernyd to be *ver*tuvs & well thewed;
who will not lerne, nedely he must be lewed.

¶ Afore all thyng, & pryncypally
In the mornyng whan ye vp ryse,
To worship god haue in memory;
with crysti*s* crosse loke ye blesse ye thryse,

[3]

Take hede therfore / and herkne what I saye — Attend therefore to what I say.
Ande gyue therto / your goode aduertence
Lete not your ere be here & your herte awaye 17
But put ye therto / besy diligence
Leynge aparte al wantown Insolence
Lerneth to be vertuous / and wel thewede — Learn good manners.
Who wil not lerne / nedely he must be lewed 21

[4]

Afore alle thinge / ande principally — [Leaf 1 b.]
In the morenynge / whan ye vp rise — On rising,
To worshipe gode / haue in memorie 24
With crystes crosse / loke ye blesse you thrise — cross yourself,
Your pater noster / saye in deuoute wyse — say your Pater Noster, Ave, and Creed.
Aue maria / with the holy crede
Thenne alle the day / the better shal ye spede 28

[5]

And while that ye be aboute honestly
To dresse your self / & do oñ your araye — While dressing,
With your felawe / wel and tretably 31
Oure lady matyns / loke that ye saye — say our Lady's Matins,
Ande this obseruañce / vse ye every daye
With pryme and ouris / withouten drede — Prime, and Hours.
The blesside lady / wil quyte you your mede 35

[*Hill's Text.*]

your patere noster say in devoute wyse,
Aue maria / with the holy crede ;
28 Then aft the day the better shall ye spede.

¶ And while ye dresse your selfe, honestly
To dresse your selfe & do on your araye,
with your felowe weft & tretably
32 Owre lady matens loke that you say ;
And this observance vse ye euery day,
with pryme & owers with-owt drede.
the blessyd lady wift quyte you your mede.

[6]

Kembe youre hede and loke ye kepe hit clene,
Youre eris twayne suffre not foule to be;
In youre visage wayteth no spotte be sene,
Purge youre nase, let hit not combred be
Wyth foule matiers Ayenst all oneste,
But wyth bare hande no matier from hit feche,
For that is a foule and an vncurtays teche.

[7]

Youre handes wassheth, that is an holsom thyng,
Youre nayles loke they be not geet blake,
Suffre hem not to ben ouer long growyng;
To youre aray good hede I warne you take,
That manerly ye seet hit vp and make,
Youre hode, youre gowne, youre hose, and eke youre scho,
Wyth all array longyng youre body to.

[8]

Kepeth clene and leseth not youre gere,
And or ye passen oute of youre loggyng,
Euery garment that ye schulle vppon you were,
Awayteth welle that hit be so syttyng
As to youre degre semeth moost on accordyng;
Than woll men sey, 'for soth this childe is he
That is well taught and loueth honeste.'

---

36 ¶ Kembe yo*ur* hede, & loke you kepe yt clene; [*Hill's Text.*]
yo*ur* eres twayn suffre not fowle to be; [fl C lx back]
In yo*ur* wysage loke no spote be sene;
purge yo*ur* nose; lett no ma*n* in yt se
The vile matter; yt ys none honeste;
Ne w*ith* yo*ur* bare hon d no fylth fro*m* yt feche,
ffor *that* ys fowle, & an vncurtoys teche.

¶ Yo*ur* hond*is* wasshe; yt ys an holsom thyng;
yo*ur* naylis loke they be not gety blake,
Ne suffre not the*m* over longe growyng.

[6]

Kembe your hede / & loke ye kepe it clene — Comb your head; clean your ears
Your eres tweyne / suffre not fowl to be
In your visage / wayte no spot be sene
Purge your nose / lete noman in it see — and nose;
The vile mater / it is none honeste
Ne with your bare honde / no filth fro it fecche — don't pick it.
For that is fowl / and an vncurtoys teche

[7]

Your hondes wesshe / it is an holsom thinge — [Leaf 2 *a*.]
Your naylis loke / they be not gety blacke — Wash your hands; don't keep your nails jet-black or too long.
Ne suffre not hem / to be ouer longe growyng
To your araye / I warne you good hede take
That manerly ye fytte it vp and make — Wear fit clothes, that fit well
Your hoode. gowne. hosyn / & eke your sho
With al your aray longyng your body to

[8]

Kepe you clene / and lose not your gere
And or ye passe / out of your loggynge
Euery garment / that ye shal on were
Awayte wel / that it be so syttynge — and suit your station;
As to your degre / semeth acordynge
Thenne wil men saye / forsoth this childe is he — the men will praise you.
That is wel taught / and louyth honeste

To your A-raye I warne you good hede take, — [*Hill's Text.*]
Manerly & ffyte loke you yt make;
your hood / gowne / hosen / & eke your sho,
with all your araye longyng your body to.

¶ Kepe you clene, & lose not your gere;
& or you passe owt of your lodgyng,
Euery garment *that* ye shall were,
Awayte well *that* yt be so syttyng
& to your degre semed accordyng;
Than will men say, "for sothe *this* child ys he
that ys well tawght, & loweth honeste."

[9]

And as ye walke and passen be the strete,
Be ye not nyce of chere and countenance;
And loke, my childe, to folkys that ye mete,
Ye spekyn feyre wyth wordis of plesaunce;
To youre souerayne wyth humble obeysaunce,
To hym that is youre felowe and pere,
Yevith feyre langage wyth ryght frendly chere.

[10]

CAst not wyth stone or styke at foule ne beste,
And where ye walke be ware that ye ne rage,[1]
For and ye do, ye shall to byrcheley feest.
Terre[2] wyth no hounde in fylde nor in village,
Gothe forth in peace, demenyng youre vysage
In sobre wyse, that men may of you say,
'A goodly childe ther passith be the way.'

[1] MS. nerage.

[2] MS. There, *by mistake.*

[11]

Whan ye come to the chirche, my lytyll chylde,
Holy watir ye schull vppon you caste
Be-fore the crosse wyth [chere] moste meke and mylde;
Than knelyth doune and knoketh on youre breste,
Thankyng the lorde that on the crosse did rest,
And there for you suffred his hert to blede,
Seyth or ye ryse Pater, Aue, and A crede.

[*Hill's Text.*]

¶ And as ye walke & passe by *the* strete,
Be ye not Nyce of chere & covntenavnce,
but loke, my child, to folk*is that* you mete,
& loke ye speke fayere *with* word*is* of plesavnce,
Demvre, & curtoys of yo*ur* Demenavnce.
To hy*m that* ys yowr*e* felow & pere,
Geve you fayre langage & a ffrendly chere.

¶ Cast no styke ne stone at fowle ne beste;
& wher ye walke, be ware ye ne rage,
ffor yff ye do ye shall to brecheles feest.
Terre not *with* hovndis i*n* fyld ne i*n* vilage;

[9]

And as ye walke / and passe by the strete — As you walk, look pleasantly at folk,
Be ye not nyce of chere / and countenaunce
But loke my child / to folkes that ye mete 59
Ye speke fayr / with wordes of plesaunce
Demure and curtoys / of your demenaunce
To hym that is your felawe and*e* pere — and greet your fellows friendly;
Gyue ye fair langage / and a frendly chere 63

[10]

Caste no styck ne stone at fowle ne beest — [Leaf 2 *b*.] don't shy stones at bird or beast,
And where ye walke / bewarre ye ne rage
For yf ye doo / ye shal to brecheles feest 66
Terre not with hou*n*de in felde ne in vilage — or quarrel with dogs.
Go forth your waye / demenyng your viage
In sobre wyse / that men may of you saye
A goodly chyld*e* / ther passeth by the waye 70

[11]

And whan ye come to þ^e^ chirche my litil child — At church, holy-water yourself,
Holy water / ye shal vpon you caste
Byfore þ^e^ crosse / with chere meke & mylde 73
Knele adoun̄ / and knocke on your breste — kneel before the cross, knock on your breast,
Thankyng the good lord þ^t^ on it did*e* reste
And there / for you suffryd his sides to blede
Saye ye or ye rise / pat*er* noster / aue / & a crede 77 and say prayers.

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68 Go furth yo*ur* way, Demenyng yo*ur* viage — [*Hill's Text.*]
In sober wyse, *that* me*n* maye of you saye,
"A goodly chyld ther passith by the way."

¶ And whe*n* ye cu*m* to *the* churche, my litiłł child,
72 holy water ye shałł vpon you caste.
be-fore *the* crosse w*ith* chere meke & mylde
knele a-downe, & knoke on yo*ur* brest,
Thankyng *that* good lord *that* on yt dyde reste,
76 & ther for you suffred his sydys to blede;
Saye ye, or you ryse, pater no*ster* / aue / & a crede.

[12]

Avise you well Also for eny thyng,
The schirche of prayer is the house and place;
Be ware there-fore of clappe or Ianglyng, 80
For in the schirche that is full gret trysspace,
And A token of hem that lacken grace;
Ther beth demure and kepeth youre sylence,
And serueth god wyth all youre deligence. 84

[13]

TO helpe the prest whan he shall sey the masse,
Whan hit shall happen you or be-tyde,
Remeue not ferre ne from his presence passe, 87
Kneleth or stondeth deuoutly hym be-syde,
And not to nyghe; youre tounge mooste be applied
To Answere hym wyth [1] v[o]ice full moderate;
Avyse you well, my lityll childe, Algate 91

[1] MS. wyth hym wyth.

[14]

TO mynystre wyth de-voute Reuerence,
Loke that ye do youre humble obseruaunce
Debonarly wyth [dewe] obideence, 94
Cyrcum-spectly, wyth euer[y] circumstaunce
Of porte, of chere, demevire of countenaunce,
Remembryng, the lord aboue is he
Whom to serue is grettest liberté. 98

¶ Avyce you well also for any thynge, [Hill's Text.]
The chyrche, of prayer ys howse & place;
80 be ware *ther*for of clappe or Iangelynge,
ffor *in* the chyrche yt ys a full gret trespas,
& a token of suche as lacketh grace.
Ther be ye demvre, & kepe ye scilence,
84 And serve ye god with all your delygence.

To helpe *the* Preest whan he sayth masse, [fll C lxj.]
whan yt shall happen you or betyde,
Remeve not fer, ne from his presence passe;
88 knele or stonde you devovtly hym besyde,

[12]

Auyse you wel also / for ony thinge
The chirche of prayer / is hous and place
Beware therfore / of clappe or Iangelynge
For in þe chirche / it is a ful grete trespaas
And a token of suche / as lackyth grace
There be ye demure / and kepe ye scilence
And serue ye god / with al your diligence

Don't chatter,
but be silent, and serve God.

[13]

To helpe the preest / whan he saith masse
Whan it shal happen you or betyde
Remeue not fer / ne from his presence passe
Knele or stonde ye / deuoutly hym besyde
And not to nygħ your tonge muste be applide
Tanswere hym / with voys ful moderate
Auyse you wel / my lityl childe algate

[Leaf 8 *a*]
When you help the priest at Mass,
kneel or stand near him,
and answer him in a moderate tone.

[14]

To mynystre / with deuoute reuerence
Loke ye do / youre humble obseruañce
Debonairly / with due obedyence
Circumspectly / with euery circumstaunce
Of poort and chere / of goodly countenañce
Remembrynge wel the lorde / a boue is he
Whom to serue / is grettest liberte

Minister reverently
and circumspectly.

[*Hill's Text.*]

& not to nyġh : your tonge mvst be applyde
To answere hym with woyce moderate.
Avyce you weⁱᵗ, my lytiⁱᵗ child, algate

¶ To mynyster with devout reverence ;
loke ye do your humble observaunce
Debonerly wyth dewe obedyence,
Circumspectly with euery circumstavnce
Of poort, & chere of goodly covntenavnce,
Remembryng well the lorde a-bove ys he,
whome to serve ys grettest lyberte.

[15]

And whan ye speke, loketh men in the face [1]
Wyth sobre chere and goodly semblaunce;
Cast not youre eye asyde in odir place,
For that is a tokyn of wantowne inconstaunce,
Which wolle appeyre youre name, and disauaunce;
The wyse man seyth, 'who hathe this signes thre
Ne is not like a good man [for] to be—

[1] MS. visage.

[16]

Yn hert,' he seyth, 'who that is inconstaunte,[2]
A waveryng eye, glyddryng but sodenly
From place to place, and A fote[3] variaunte[4]
That in no place abydeth stabully—
Thes ben signes,' the wyse man seyth sekerly,
'Of suche a wyght as is vnmanerly nyce,
And is full like dissposed be to vice.'

[2] MS. inconstaunce
[3] MS. fore.
[4] MS. variaunce.

[17]

And wayte, my childe, whan ye stond at the table,
Of souereyne or maister whether hit be,
Applieth you [for] to be seruysable,
That no defaute in you may founde be;
Loke who doth best and hym envyeth ye,
And specially vseth attendaunce,
Whiche is to souereyne thyng of gret plesaunce.

[*Hill's Text.*]

¶ And whan ye speke, loke men in *the* face
with sobre chere & goodly semblavnce;
Caste not eye a-side in no othere place,
ffor *that* ys a token of a wanton constavnce
which will apayre yo*ur* name, & dysavance.
The wyse man sayth, 'who hath these thyng*is* iij,
ys not lyke a good man for to be:

¶ 'In herte,' he sayth, 'who *that* ys Inconstavnte,
A waverynge eye, glydyng sodenly
ffro place to place, & a foote varyavnte
that in no place a-bydyth stabli,

[15]

And whan ye speke / loke men in the face
With sobre chere / and*e* goodly semblaunce
Caste not your eye a syde / in other place
For that is a token of wantouñ inconstan*ce*
Whiche wil appeyre your name & disauañce
The wise man saith who hath these thi*n*gis thre
Is not lyke a good*e* man for to be

When you speak to men, look 'em in the face.

The Wise Man says

[16]

In herte he seith / who that is inconstañte
A waueryng eye / glydyng sodeynly
Fro place to place / & a foot variañte
That in no place / abydeth stably
These ben þ^e^ signes / the wiseman seith sikerly
Of suche a wight / as is vnmanerly nyce
And is ful likely disposid vnto vyce

[Leaf 3 *b*.]

an inconstant man with a wavering eye and a wandering foot

will turn to vice.

[17]

Awayte my chylde / whan ye stan*d*e atte table
Of maister or souerayn / whether it be
Applye you for to be seruysable
That no defaute in you founden be
Loke / who doth best / and hym ensiewe ye
And in especyal / vse ye attendaunce
Wherein ye shal your self best auaunce

When you serve at table,

be attentive and ndy,

specially to well-off men.

[*Hill's Text.*]

Thyse bene *th*e thyng*is*,' *th*e wysman sayth sekerly,
'Off suche a wayghte *that* be vnmanerly nyce,
& be fuⁿ lykely dysposed vnto vyce.'

¶ Awayte, my chyld, wha*n* ye stonde at table,
Off mayster or soverayne whe*ther* yt be,
Applye you for to be servysable
That no defawte in you fownden be;
loke who dothe best, & hym folow ye,
& in especyaⁿ vse ye attendavnce
wheryn ye shaⁿ yo*ur* selfe best avaunce.

[18]

A[s] ye be comaundyd, so ye do algate,
Beth not wyth-oute cause from the tabul absent;
Hit is plesaunce vnto the gret astate
To se theyre saruaunt about them present;
Haunteth no halkes, for then ye woll be schent.
Lette maner and Mesure be youre guydes twey,
So shall ye best please, I dare well sey.

[19]

Rewarde all-way the loke and countenaunce
Of youre master, or of youre souereine,
Ther shall ye best preue what is plesaunce,
And what displesaunce; this is the soth serteyne,
The chere discureth often tyme both twayne,
And eke the chere may some tyme you addresse
In thyng that langage may not þan expresse.

[20]

And what ye here there, loke ye kepe hit secre,
Besy report of mystrust is cheff norice;
Mekell langage may not all fautles be;
Than doth, my childe, as teicheth you the wyse,
Whiche vnto you this wysdome dothe devise,
'Here and see, be still in euery prees,[1]
Passe forth youre way in silence and in pees.'

[1] MS. 'in euery place and in prees.' *Place* was to have been the last word; *and in prees* was carelessly *added*, instead of striking out *place*.—Sk.

[*Hill's Text.*]

120 ¶ As ye be comavnded, so do ye algate;
be not cavseles fro *the* table absente;
yt ys a grete pleasure to *the* high estate [1]
To se his servaunttes abowte hym presente.
124 havnte no halke, for then ye will be shente;
lette manere & mesure be your gydes twayne;
so shall ye best please, I dare savely sayne.

[1 noble, lord.]

¶ Reward also thy loke & contenavnce,
128 Off your master or of your soverayne,
so shall ye best preve what ys his plesavnce
or ellis his dysplesavnce: this ys sertayne,

[18]

As ye be comandede / so do ye algate
Be not causeles / fro the table absent
It is a grete plesure / to the hyghe estate
To see his seruantis aboute hym present
Haunte no halke / for thenne ye wil be shente
Lete maner & mesure / be your gydes tweyne
So shal ye best plese / I dar sauely seyne

Don't absent yourself from table,

or stick yourself in a corner. Let Manners and Moderation guide you.

[19]

Rewarde also the loke ande contenaunce
Of your maister / or of your souereyne
So shal ye best preue. what is his plesãnce
Or els displesaunce / this is soth serteyne
The chere discouerith / often bothe tweyne
And eke þe chere / somtyme may you addresse
In thingis / þt langage may not them expresse

[Leaf 4 a.]

Look at your master's face; that'll show whether he's pleased or not.

[20]

Ande that ye her loke / kepe alway secree
Besy reporte / of mischief is chief noryse
Mykyl langage / may not al fawtles bee
Thenne do my childe / as techeth you the wyse
Whiche vnto you / this lesson doth deuyse
Here and see / ande be stylle in euery prees
Passe forth your way in scilence & in pees

Keep secret all you hear.

Hear, see, and go your way.

The chere discovereth oftyn both[e] twayn, [*Hill's Text.*]
& eke the chere sumtyme may yow addresse
In thyngis the langage may not then expresse.

¶ And *that* ye here, loke ye kepe alway secre; [ff C lxj, back.]
besy reporte, of myschefe ys chefe noryse;
Mykyll langage may not all fawtles be;
Then do, my chyld, as techeth you *the* wyse
whiche vnto you *this* lessun doth devyce:
here & see, & be styll in euery prees,
passe forthe your way *in* scilence & *in* pees.

[21]

And yit in Aventure ye, if the caase require,
Ye most speke as hit may doo percace ; [1]
Seuen condicions obserue as ye shall hire,
Avise you well what ye sey and in what place,
Of whom, and to whom, in youre mynde compace ;
Howe ye shall speke, and whan, taketh good hede,
This counseilleth the wyse man wyth-outen drede.

[1] MS. precace.

[22]

Awayte, my childe, ye haue you manerly,
Whan at youre mete ye sittyn at youre table ;
In euery pres, in euery company,
Disposeth you to be so componable,
That men may you reporte for comendable ;
For tristeth well, vppon youre bering
Men woll you blame or yeven you preysing.

[23]

And printeth chiefly in youre memorie,
For A principalle poynt of feire norture,
Ye depraue no man absent especially ;
Seint Austyn Amonishith wyth besy cure,
Howe at the table men shull them assure,
That there escapeth them no suche langage,
As myght turne other folke to disparage.

[*Hill's Text.*]

¶ And yet *in* aduenture, yf *the* caas requyre,
ye may speke, but ye must *per*caas
Seven [1] co*n*dyc*i*ons obse*r*ve, as ye may here :
144 Avyce ye weⁱᵗ what ye say, & *in* what place,
Off whom, & to whom, i*n* yo*u*r mynd co*m*pace ;
how ye shaⁱᵗ speke, & wha*n*, take good hede :
*th*is cow[n]syled *the* wyse ma*n* wi*th*owten
drede.

148 A-wayte, my chyld, ye behaue you mane*r*ly
wha*n* at yo*u*r mete ye sytte at the table ;
In eue*r*y prees & In eue*r*y cu*m*pany

[1 Six they are at p. 358, *Babees Book*, of the Wise Man.]

[21]

And yet in auenture / yf the caas require
Ye may speke / but ye muste thenne *per*caas
Seue*n* co*n*dici*o*ns obserue / as ye may now hyre
Auyse you wel / what ye saye / & in what place
Of whom / & to whom in your mynde co*m*pace
How ye shal speke / & whan take good hede
This co*u*ncelith the wise man withoute drede

If you must speak, observe the seven conditions.

[22]

Awayte my chylde / ye be haue you manerly
Whan at your mete / ye sitte at the table
In euery prees and in euery company
Dispose you to be so compenable
That men may of you reporte for *com*me*n*dable
For trusteth wel / vpon your berynge
Men wil you blame or gyue preysynge

[Leaf 4 *b*.]

When you're at meals,

be companionable

[23]

And prynte ye trewly your memorie
For a princypal point of fair noreture
Ye depraue no man absent especyally
Saynt austyn amonessheth with besy cure
How men atte table / shold hem assure
That there escape them / no suche langage
As myght other folke hurte to disparage

and don't run down absent men. St Austin

[*Hill's Text*.]

Dyspose you to be so cu*m*penable
*th*at me*n* may of you reporte for co*m*me*n*dable;
ffor, trustyth weⁱⁱ, vpon yo*u*r beryng
Men wiⁱⁱ you blame or gyve p*ra*ysyng.

¶ And prynte ye truly *th*is in yo*u*r memorye
for a pryncypaⁱⁱ poynt of fayer noretvre,
*th*at ye deprave no ma*n* absente specyally.
Saynt Austyne amonessheth w*ith* besy cure,
howe me*n* att table shulde the*m* assure
that ther escape the*m* no suche langage
As myght hurte or bryng folke to disparage.

[24]

This curteise clarke writeth in ryght this wyse,
Rebukyng the vice of vile detraccioun ;
'What man hit be that of custome and guise
Hurteth wyth his toung wyth foule corrosioun
The absent wight, for that abusioun
Suche detractoure [wayue] [1] from this table
As vn-worthe, not to be reprocheable.

[1] A word lost.

[25]

Whan ye sitten therfor at youre repaste,
Annoyethe no man present nor absent,
But speketh feyre, for and ye make waste
Off [large] langage, for soth ye most be schent ;
And wan ye speke, speketh wyth good entent
Of maters appendyng to myrth and plesaunce,
But nothyng that may causen men greuaunce.

[26]

Eschewe also taches of foule rauenyng,
Of gredy lust the vncurteyce appetite ;
Pres not to sone to youre viaunde, restraine
Youre handis a while wyth manerly respytte ;
Fedith for necessite, not for delite,
Demeneth you in mete and drink soo sobrely,
That ye be not infecte wyth gloteny.

[*Hill's Text.*]

¶ This curteys clerke wryteth *in this* wyse,
Rebukyng the vyce of vyle detraccion :
what may yt be *that* of custum & gvyse
hurteth *with* tonge or by fowle colusyon
The absente / weyne [1] ye for *that* abusyon
Suche a detractowre from the table
As vnworthy & also reprocheable.

[1] *or* weyue]

¶ Whan ye sytte *ther*for at your repast,
Annoye ye no man present nor absente,
but speke ye fewe ; for yff ye make wast
of large langage, for soth ye must be shent.

[24]

This curtoys clerk / writeth in this wise
Rebukynge the vice / of vyle detraccion — rebukes the vice of detraction,
What man it be / that of custom & guyse
Hurteth with tunge / or by foule colusiõn — and bids you turn all backbiters from the table
Thabsente / weyue ye for that abusiõn
Suche a detractour / from the table
As vnworthy / and also reprochable

[25]

Whan ye sitte therfore at your repaste — [Leaf 5 *a*.]
Annoye ye noman presente nor absente
But speke ye fewe / for yf ye make waste — Speak little,
Of large langage / for sothe ye must be shent
And whan ye speke / speke ye with good *entent* — and that pleasantly.
Of maters acordynge vnto plesance
But nothi*n*g / that may cause men greuañce

[26]

Eschewe also tacches of foule Raueyne — Don't be ravenous,
Of gredy luste / with vncurteys appetyte [1]
Prece not to sone / fro your viand restreyne — but keep your hands from your food for a time.
Your honde a while / with manerly respite
Fede you for necessite / & not for delite
Demene you with mete / & drynke so sobrely
That ye not ben enfecte with glotony

[1] *Orig.* appetyce.

& wha*n* ye speke // speke w*ith* good Intent — [*Hill's Text.*]
Off maters accordyng vnto plesavnce,
but no thy*n*ge *tha*t may cavse me*n* grevaunce.

¶ Eschewe also tacches of fowle ravayne,
of gredy luste; w*ith* vncurteys appetyte
prece not to sone; fro yo*u*r vyande restrayn*e*
yo*u*r hand a while w*ith* manerly respyte;
ffede you for necessyte, & not for delyte.
Demene you w*ith* mete & dry*n*ke so soberly
That ye not be Infecte wyth glotony.

[27]

Embrewe not youre vesselle ne youre cuppe [1]
Ouer mesure and maner, but saue them clene;
Ensoyle not youre cuppe, but kepe hit clenely,
Lete no fatte ferthyng of youre lippe be sen.
For that is foule; wotte you what I mene?
Or than ye drincke, for youre owne honeste,
Youre lippis wepe, and klenly loke they be.

[1] *Sic.* Read "napery."

[28]

Blowe not in youre drincke ne in youre potage,
Ne farsith not youre disshe to full of brede,
Ne bere not youre knyf towarde youre vysage,
For there-in is parell and mekell drede.
Clawe not youre face ne touche not youre hede
Wyth youre bare hande, sittyng at the table,
For in norture that is reprouable.

[29]

Lowse not youre gyrdyll syttyng at youre table,[2]
For that is a tache of vncurtesye,
But and ye seme ye be enbrasyde streite,
Or than ye sitte amende hit secrely,
So couertly that no wyght hit espie.
Be ware also no breth from you rebounde
Vppe ne downe, be ware that shamefull sounde.

[2] *Sic.* Read "mete."

[*Hill's Text.*] [ffl C lxij.]

¶ Enbrewe not *your* vesselle ne *your* naprye
184 over maner & mesure, but kepe them clene;
Ensoyle not *your* cuppe, but kepe yt clenly,
lete no farsyone on *your* lyppis be sene,
ffor *that* ys fowle; ye wott what I mene.
188 Or than ye drynke, for *your* own honeste
your lyppys wype, & clenly loke they be.

¶ Blowe not *in your* drynke ne *in your* pottage,
Ne ferce not *your* disshe to fulle of brede;
192 bere not *your* knyf toward *your* vysage,
ffor *ther*yn ys peryll & mykell drede;

[27]

Enbrewe not your vessel / ne your naprye — Don't dirty your cloth or cup.
Ouer maner & mesure / but kepe hem clene
Ensoyle not your cuppe / but kepe it clenlye 185
Lete no fat farssine / on your lippes be sene
For that is fowle / ye wote what I mene
Or than ye drynke / for your owen honeste — Wipe your lips before you drink.
Your lippes wype / and clenly loke they be 189

[28]

Blowe not in your drinke ne in your potage — [Leaf 5 b.] Don't blow on your food,
Ne farse not your dishe to ful of brede
Bere not your knyf / to warde your visage 192 — or put your knife to your face,
For therin is parelle / and mykyl drede
Clawe not your visage / touche not your hede — or scratch it or your head.
With your bare honde / sittyng atte table
For in norture / suche thing is reprouable 196

[29]

Lose not your gyrdel / sittyng at your mete — Don't undo your girdle at table;
For that is a tacche / of vncurtesye
But yf ye seme / ye be embraced streite 199 — if it's tight, let it out before you sit down.
Or then ye sytte / amende it secretly
So couertly that no wight you espye
Beware also / no breth fro you rebounde — Don't break wind up or down.
Vp ne doun / leste ye were shameful founde 203

[*Hill's Text.*]

Clawe not *your* visage, tovche not *your* hede
with your bare honde syttyng at *the* table,
196 ffor *in* norture suche thyng*is* be rep*ro*veable.

¶ Lose not *your* gyrdyll syttyng at *your* mete,
ffor *that* is a tache of vncurtesye;
but yff ye seme ye be enbrased streyte,
200 or than ye sytte, amend yt secretly
So wysely *that* no wyght you aspye.
be ware also no breth fro you rebownd
Vp ne downe, lest ye were shamfull fownd.

[30]

Beth huste in chambre, cilent in the halle,
Herkenyth well, yeueth good audience;
Yef vsher or marchall for eny romour calle,
Putting Ianglers to rebuke and cilence,
Beth mylde of langage, demure of eloquence;
Enforcith you to them confourmyde be,
That can most good and haue humanyte.

[31]

Touche not wyth mete salt in the saler,
Lest folke Appoynt you of vncunnyngnesse,
Dresse hit apparte vppon a clene tranchere;
Force not youre mouth to fulle for wantannesse,
Lene not vppon the table, that is but rudesse,
And yf I shall to you so playnly say,
Ouer the table ye shull not spette convey.

[32]

Yif ye be seruid wyth metis delicate,
Departith wyth youre fellowys in gentyl wyse,
The clarke seith, 'nature is content and saciate
Wyth meane diete, and lytill shall suffice.'
Departyth therfore, as I to you devise;
Engrosith not vnto youre silven all,
For gentilnesse will ay be lyberall.

[*Hill's Text.*]

¶ Be ye husht *in* chambre, scylente *in* hall;
herkyn well, & geve good audyence
yff vsshar or marchall for any rvmowre call;
putt ye yanglers to rebuke for scilence.
Be ye myld of lan*g*age, demvre of eloquence;
Enforce you vnto hy*m* co*n*formed to be
that can most good, & hathe humanyte.

¶ Towch not w*ith* yo*ur* mete salte i*n* *the* saler,
leest folke apoynte you of vnco*n*nyngnesse;
Dresse yt aparte vpon a clene trenshere.
ffarste not yo*ur* movth to full for wantonesse;

[30]

Be ye husht in chambre / scylent in halle — Be silent,
Herken wel and*e* gyue good*e* audience
Yf vssher or marchal for ony Rumour calle
Put ye Ianglers to rebuke for silence — and put chatterers to rebuke.
Be ye mylde of langage / demure of eloqu*e*nce
Enforce you vnto hym conformed to be — Imitate him who has humanity.
That can moste good / and*e* hath humanyte

[31]

Touche not with your mete / salt *in* the saler — [Leaf 6 *a*.] Don't dip your meat in the saltcellar,
Lest folk apoynte you of vnconnyngnesse
Dresse it aparte / vpon a clene trencher
Farse not your mouth to ful / for wa*n*tonesse
Lene not vpon the table / for that rude is — lean on the table,
And yf I shal to you playnly saye
Ouer the table / ye shal not spetel conueye — or spit over it.

[32]

Yef ye be serued / with metes delicate — Share dainties with your fellows:
Departe with your felowe / in gentil wise
The clerck saith / nature is conte*n*t & saciate
With mene diete / and litil shall suffyse
Departe therfore / as I you deuyse
Engrose not / vnto your self alle
For gentilnes / wil aye be liberalle — gentleness is liberal.

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lene not on *the* table, for *that* rvde ys ; [*Hill's Text.*]
& yff I shall to you playnly saye,
over *the* table ye shall not spetell co*n*veye.

¶ Yff ye be s*er*vede w*ith* met*is* delycate,
Departe w*ith* yo*ur* felawe i*n* gentill wyse ;
the clerke seyth, 'nature ys co*n*tent & sacyate
w*ith* mene dyete, & lytill shall suffyce ;'
Departe therfor, as I you devyce,
Engrose not vnto yowr*e* selfe all,
ffor gentylnesse will ay be lyberall.

[33]

And wan *per*cace youre seruice is not large,
Grucchith not wyth frownyng countenaunce,
Ne maketh not ther-of to mekell charge,
Disposeth you to goodly sufferaunce,
And what ye haue, take hit for suffisaunce;
Holde you pleased wyth that god hath you sent,
He hath Inough [1] that can hold hym content.

[1] MS. Incught.

[34]

Burnysh no bonys wyth youre tethe, be ware,
That houndis tecche fayleth of curtesie;
But wyth youre knyff make the bonys bare;
Handell youre mete so well and so clenly,
That ye offenden not the company
Where ye be sette, as ferre-forth as ye can;
Remembre well that man*er* maketh man.

[35]

And whan your teeth shall cutte youre mete small,
Wyth open mouth be ware that ye not ete,
But loke youre lippis be closede as a wall,
Whan to & [2] fro ye trauers youre mete;
Kepe you so close that men haue no conceite
To seyn of you langage of vilonye,
Be cause ye ete youre mete vnma[ne]rly.

[2] MS. a.

¶ And wha*n* per*c*aas yo*ur* ser*v*yce ys not large, [*Hill's Text.*]
Groge not *with* frownynge covntenavnce,
Ne make ther of not to mykyll charge;
228 Dyspose you to goodly suffravnce,
& what ye haue, take yt in suffysavnce;
be you plesid *with* suche as god hath you sent;
he hath̄ ynowgh þat ca*n* hold hy*m* co*n*tente.

232 Burnysshe no bonys *with* yo*ur* teth̄, be ware, [fll C lxij back.]
Suche hownd*is* tacches fallen of vncurtesye,
but *with* yo*ur* knyfe make the bonys bare.
Handle yo*ur* mete so well & so clenly

[33]

And whan percaas your seruise is not large
Gruccheth not / with frownyng contenaunce
Ne make therof / not to mykyl charge
Dispose you to goodly suffraunce
And what ye haue / take it in suffysaunce
Be ye plesid with suche as god hath you sent
He hath ynough / that can holde hym content

If your helping is not large, don't grumble,

but be content.

[34]

Burnysshe no bones / with your teth / beware
Suche houndis tacches / falle of vncurtesye
But with your knyf / make the bones bare
Handle your mete / so wel and so clenly
That ye offende not the company
Where ye be sette / as ferforth as ye can
Remembryng wel / that manners make man

[Leaf 6 b.]
Don't burnish bones with your teeth.

Handle your food cleanly,

for Manners make Man.

[35]

And whan that / ye ete your mete smalle
With open mouth / beware ye not ete
But loke your lippes / be closed as a walle
Whan to and fro / ye trauerse your mete
Kepe you so cloos / that men haue no conseite
To say of you / ony langage or vilonye
Bicause ye ete your mete / vnmanerly

Eat with your lips closed.

---

236 That ye offende not the company
wher ye be sette. as ferforthe as ye can,
Remembryng well that maners make man.

[*Hill's Text.*]

¶ And whan *that* ye ete your mete small,
240 with open mowth be ware ye not ete,
but loke / your lyppes be closed as a wall;
whan to & fro ye traverse your mete,
kepe you so cloos *that* men haue no conceyte
244 To saye of you any langage or vylonye
by cavse ye ete your mete so vnmanerly.

[36]

Be ware, my child, of laughing ou*er* mesure,
Ye shall not Also at the borde youre naylis pare,
Ne pike not youre teth wyth youre knyff, I you ensure,
Ete at youre messe, and odir folkes spare ;
A glottou*n* can but make dissches bare,
And of Inough he taketh neu*er* hede,
He fedith for lust more than [1] he doth for nede.

[1] MS. that.

[37]

And whan the borde is then [as] of se*r*uice,
Not replenyshide wyth gret diuercite,
Of mete and drincke good chere may than suffice,
Hit is A signe of gret humanite,
Wyth gladsom chere than fulsom for to be ;
The poet seyth howe that the poure borde
Men may encrese wyth cherefull wille and worde.

[38]

And o thing, my childe, I warne you vndirstonde,
Specially for youre owne honeste,
In the water wasschith so clene youre hande,
That youre towell neuer ensoyled be
So foule that hit be lothely vnto se ;
Wasschith wyth watire till youre handis be clene,
And in youre clothe ther shall no spotte be sene.

[*Hill's Text.*]

¶ Beware, my chyld, of laughynge ou*er* mesure ;
Ne at *the* borde ye shall no nayles pare,
Ne pyke yo*ur* teth w*ith* knyf, I you ensure.
Ete at yo*ur* messe, & othere folk*is* spare ;
A gloton ca*n* but make *the* bonys bare,
& of ynowgh he takyth nevere hede,
he ffedyth more for lust than for nede.

¶ And wha*n* *the* borde ys thyn as of se*r*vyce,
Nowght replenysshed w*ith* gret dyversite
of mete & drynke, gud chere may tha*n* suffice,
w*ith* honest talkyng ; & also owght ye

[36]

Beware my childe / of laughyng ou*er* mesure
Ne at the borde / ye shall no naylis pare
Ne pyke your teth / with knyf / I you ensure
Ete at your messe / and other folkes spare
A gloton can but make the bones bare
And*e* of ynough / he taketh neuer hede
He fedith more for lust / than for nede

Don't pare your nails at table, or pick your teeth with a knife.

[37]

And whan þ^e^ borde is thynne / as of seruyse
Nought replenesshed with grete diuersite
Of mete & dri*n*ke good chere may then̄ suffise
With honest talkyng / and also ought ye
With gladsom chere / thenne fulsom for to be
The poete saith / hou that a poure borde
Men may enriche / with cheerful wil & worde

[Leaf 7 *a*.] When there are not many dishes, be satisfied with chatting cheerily.

[38]

And one thyng my chylde / ye vnderstonde
In especyall*e* / for your owne honeste
In the water / wasshe so clene your honde
That your towel / neuer enfoyled be
So fowle / that it be lothsom on to see
Wasshe with water / your hondes so cleene
That in the towel shal no spotte be sene

Wash your hands clean in the water, so as to leave no dirt on your towel.

[*Hill's Text.*]

w*ith* gladsu*m* chere the*n* fulsome for to be :
The poete seyth how *that* ' a powre borde
Me*n* may enryche w*ith* cherfull will & worde.'

¶ And on thyng, my child, ye vnderstond,
In especyall for yo*ur* own honeste :
In *th*e wat*er* wasshe so clene yo*ur* hond
that yo*ur* towell never ensoyled be
So fowle *that* yt be lothsome on to see ;
wasshe w*ith* wat*er* yo*ur* hond*is* so clene
that in *th*e towell shall no spote be sene.

[39]

Leue not youre spone in youre dissche standyng,
Ne vppon the brede hit shall not lie;
Lette youre trenchoure be clene for eny thyng,
Yif ye haue no chaunge, yit as honestly
As ye can, maketh avoydie,
So that no fragment from youre trenchoure falle;
Do this, my childe, in chambre and in halle.

[40]

Whan Another speketh at the table,
Be ware ye interrupte[1] not is tale nor langage,
For that is a thing discommendable,
And hit is no signe of folkes sage
To ben of wordis besy and outrage;
For the wyse man seyth pleinly in sentence,
'He shall be wyse that yevith Audience.'

[1] MS. *corruptly has* nattiripte.

[41]

Vndre-stondeth ther-fore or than ye speke,
Printyng in youre mynde clerely the sentence,
He that vseth A mannes tale to breke
Lettyth vncurtesly the Audience,
And hurtyth hym-sylf for lacke of silence;
He may not yeue answere convenyent
That herith not fynally what is ment.

[*Hill's Text.*]

¶ lete not your spone in youre disshe stond,
Ne vpon the table yt shuld not lye;
lete your trenchowre be clene for any thyng,
& yf ye haue, change yet as honestly
As ye can; make avoyde manerly
So that no fragment fro your trenchere fall:
Do thus, my child, in chambere & in hall.

¶ And whan a-nother man spekyth at the table,
be ware ye interrupte not his langage,
for that ys a thyng on-comendable,
& yt ys not no signe of folkis sage

[39]

Lete not your spone / in your disshe stonding — Don't leave your spoon in your dish or on the table.
Ne vpon the table / it shold not lye
Lete your trenchour / be clene for ony thing — Keep your trencher clean.
And yf ye haue chañge / yet as honestly
As ye can / make a voyde manerly
So that no fragment / fro your trencher falle
Do thus my childe / in chambre & in halle

[40]

And whan another man / spekith atte table — [Leaf 7 b.] Don't interrupt man in his talk.
Beware ye enterrupte not / his langage
For that is a thinge discomendable
Ande it is no signe of folkes sage
To be of langage / besy ande outrage
For the wyse man saide / in his sentence
He sholde be wyse / that gyueth audience

[41]

Vnderstonde therfore or than ye speke — Before you speak, settle in your mind what you have to say.
Prynte in your mynde / clerly the sentence
Who that vsith / a mannes tale to breke
Letteth vncurteysly / alle the audyence
Ande hurteth hym self / for lack of science
He may not gyue answere conuenyente
That herith not fynally / what is mente

[*Hill's Text.*]

To be of langage besy & owtrage ;
ffor the wyse sayd in his sentence
280 'he shuld be hold [& be wyse][1] *that* gevyth audyence.'

[1 In a later hand, above the line.]

[ff C lxiij.]

¶ Vnd*er*stond *ther*for or than ye speke ;
prynt *in* yo*ur* mynde clerly *th*e sentence ;
who *that* vsyth a m*an*ys tale to breke,
284 lettyth vncurteysly all the audyence
And hurteth hym self for lake of scyence ;
he maye not geve answere co*n*venyente
that heryth not fynally what ys mente.

[42]

Be ware Also, my childe, of rehersaille
Of materis whiche ben at the table mevide;
Hit grevith ofte and dothe men disavaylle,
Full many a man that vice hath mysschevide,
Of evill thyng saide is wors often contrivide;
Suche reportis alway loke ye esschewe,
As may of olde frendis make enemyes newe.

[43]

Avise you well whan ye take youre disporte,
Honest games that ye haunte and vse,
And suche as ben of violente reporte,
I counsell you, my childe, that ye refuse;
For trustith well ye shall nout you excuse
From berchely fest, yef I may you aspie
Playng at [1] eny game of rebaudie.

[1] MS. or.

[44]

Itt is to A goodly childe well syttyng,
To vse disportis of myrth and plesaunce,
To harpe and lute, or lustely to syng,
And in the pres ryght manerly to daunce;
When men se A childe of suche gouernaunce,
They seyn, 'gladde may this [childes] frendis be
To haue a sone soo manerly as he.'

[*Hill's Text.*]

¶ But beware, my child, also of rehersayle
Off maters whiche be at *the* table meved;
It greweth̄ [1] ofte, & doth̄ men dysavayle;
ffull̄ many a man *th*at vyce hathe myscheved;
Off evyll̄ thynke sayd, ys worse contryved;
Suche reportes alwaye, my child, eschewe,
As may of olde frend*is* make enmyes newe.

[1] The line is over the *th*.

¶ Avyse you well̄ wha*n* ye take yo*u*r dysporte,
honeste games *th*at ye hawnt & vse;
& suche as bene of vyleyns report,
I cownsell̄ you, my child, *th*at ye refuse;

[42]

But beware my childe / also of rehersaylle
Of maters / whiche ben atte table meuide
It greuith ofte / ande doth men disauayle
Ful many a man / þ^t vice hath myscheuide
Of euyl thinge saide / is werse contryuide
Suche reportis / alway my childe eschewe
As may of olde frendis / make enemyes newe

Don't repeat what you heaf at table.

[43]

Aduise you wel whan ye take your disporte
Honest games / that ye haunte ande vse
And suche as ben of vylayns reporte
I counceyl you my chyld / that ye refuse
For truste ye wel / ye shal you not excuse
From brecheles feste / and I may you espye
Playnge at ony game of Rybawdrye

[Leaf 8 *a*.] Play only at proper games.

[44]

It is to a godly chyld wel syttynge
To vse disportes of myrthe & plesãnce
To harpe or lute / or lustely to synge
Or in the prees right manerly to daunce
Whan men se a chyld of suche gouernance
They saye / glad may this chyldis frendis be
To haue a chylde / so manerly as is he

You should, harp, lute, sing, or dance.

[*Hill's Text.*]

ffor truste ye weⁱᵗ ye shaⁱᵗ you not excuse
ffrom brecheles feste, & I may you espye
Playenge at any game of rebawdrye.

¶ Ytt ys to a goodly child weⁱᵗ syttyng
To vse dysportes of myrth & plesavnce,
to harpe, to lute, or lustyly to synge,
Or in the prees right manerly to davnce.
whan men se a child of suche governavnce,
thei saye, 'glade may *this* child*is* frendys be
To haue a child so manerly as ys he.'

[45]

Exersice youre-selfe also in redyng
Of bokys enournede wyth eloquence;
Ther shall ye fynde both plesaunce and lernyng, 311
And so ye may in euery good presence
Some [what] fynde and see as in sentence,
That shall accorde the tyme to ocupie,
That ye not nede to stondyn idelie. 315

[46]

Itt[1] is fare to be cominycatyfe
In matires vnto purpoos according,
So that a wight sume not excessyfe, 318
For trusteth well, hit is tedious thyng
For to here a childe multiplie talkyng,
Yif hit be not to the purpose applied,
And also wyth goodly termys aleyde. 322

[47]

Redith Gower in his writyng moralle,
That auñcient faders memorie,
Redith his bokis clepide 'confessionalle,' 325
Wyth many anodir vertuous tretie,
Full of sentence sette so frutuously,
That them to rede shall yeue you corage,
So is he fulle of sentence and langage. 329

[Hill's Text.]

¶ Excersyse also yo*ur* selfe in redyng
Off bokes enorned witħ eloquence,
ther shałł ye fynde botħ plesyre & lernynge,
312 so *that* ye may in eu*ery* good presence
Some-what fynde as in sentence
*th*at shałł accorde the tyme to occupye,
That ye not nede to stonde ydellye.

¶ It ys fayer to be comynycatyfe
317 In maters vnto purpose accordyng,
So *th*at a wyghte seme exersyfe;
ffor trustyth wełł yt ys a tedyovs thy*ng*

[1] MS. Ilt.

[45]

Excersise your self also in redynge
Of bookes enornede with eloquence
Ther shal ye fynde / bothe plesir & lernynge
So that ye may / in euery good presence
Somwhat fynde / as in sentence
That shal acorde / the tyme to ocupy
That ye not nede / to stonden ydelly

Practise reading of eloquent books.

[46]

It is fayr / for to be comynycatyf
In maters vnto purpose acordynge
So that a wyght seme excersyf
For trusteth wel / it is a tedyous thynge
For to here a chylde / multeplye talkyng
Yf it be not to the purpose applyede
Ande also with / goodly termys alyede

[Leaf 8 *b*.]
It is right to talk pertinently,

but a bore if the talk is irrelevant.

[47]

Redeth gower in his wrytynge moralle
That auncyent [1] fader of memorye
Redeth his bookes / callede confessionalle
With many another vertuous trayttye
Ful of sentence / set ful fructuosly
That hym to rede / shal gyue you corage
He is so ful of fruyt. sentence and langage

Read Gower's

1 Orig. anucyent.

Confessio Amentis.

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320 ffor to here a child multyply talkyng
yf yt be not to *the* purpose applyed,
& also w*ith* goodly termes alyed.

¶ Redyth gover *in* his wrytyng moralł,
324 That Auncyente ffader of memorye,
Redyth his bookes called co*n*fessyonalł,
w*ith* many a-nothere vertuvs tretye
ffulł of sentence sett fulł fructvously,
328 That hy*m* to rede shalł geve you covrage,
he ys so fulł of frute, sentence, & langage.

[*Hill's Text.*]

[48]

O Fader and Founder of eternate eloquence,
That eluminede all this oure britaigne;
To sone we lost his lauriate presence,
O lusty licoure of that fulsome fountaigne;
Cursed deth, why hast thou this poete slayne,
I mene Fadir chaucers, mastir Galfride?
Allas! the while, that euer he from vs diede.

[49]

Redith his bokys fulle of all plesaunce,
Clere in sentence, in longage excellent,
Brefly to wryte suche was his suffesaunce,
What-euer to sey he toke in his entent,
His longage was so feyre and pertinent,
That semed vnto mennys heryng,
Not[1] only the worde, but verrely the thing.

[1] MS. But.

[50]

Redith, my child, redith his warkys all,
Refuseth non, they ben expedient;
Sentence or langage, or both, fynde ye shall
Full delectable, for that fader ment
Of all his purpos and his hole entent
Howe to plese in euery audience,
And in oure toung was well of eloquence.

[Hill's Text.] [fll C lxiij back.]

¶ O fader & fownder of ornate eloquence
that Illumyned hast all owre bretayne!
To sone we loste thy lavreat science,
O lusty lyqvovre of *that* fulsum fontayne!
O cursed deth! why hast *thou that* poete slayne,
I mene fader chavucer, mayster galfryde?
Alas *the* while *that* ever he from vs dyed!

¶ Redyth his werkes full of plesavnce,
Clere in sentence, I*n* langage excellente:
Bryefly to wryte, such was his suffysavnce,
What-evere to say he toke *in* his entente,

[48]

O fader and founder of ornate eloquence
That enlumened hast alle our bretayne
To soone we loste / thy laureate scyence
O lusty lyquour / of that fulsom fontayne
O cursid deth / why hast thou þ^t^ poete slayne
I mene fader chaucer / maister galfryde
Alas the whyle / that euer he from vs dyde

and the Father and Founder of Eloquence,
[Leaf 163, back.]
mayster Galfryde Chawcer,

[49]

Redith his werkis / ful of plesaunce
Clere in sentence / in langage excellent
Briefly to wryte / suche was his suffysañce
What euer to saye / he toke in his entente
His langage was so fayr and pertynente
It semeth vnto mannys heerynge
Not only the worde / but verely the thynge

[Leaf 9 *a*.]
whose works are full of pleasaunce,
whose language
seems not only words, but truly things.

[50]

Redeth my chylde / redeth his bookes alle
Refuseth none / they ben expedyente
Sentence or langage / or bothe fynde ye shalle
Ful delectable / for that good fader mente
Of al his purpose / and his hole entente
How to plese in euery audyence
And in our tunge / was welle of eloquence

Read *all* his books; refuse none:
he is delightful.

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his langage was so fayere & pertynente,
yt semeth vnto manys heryng
Not only the worde, but veryly *the* thyng.

[*Hill's Text.*]

¶ Redyth, my child, redyth his bookes all,
Refusith Non, they ben expedyente;
sentence or langage, both fynd ye shall;
ffull delectable that good fader mente,
for all his purpose & his hole entente
[was] how to please in euery audyence,
& In owre tonge was well of Eloquence.

[51]

Beholde Oclyff in his translac*i*on,
In goodly langage and sentence passing wyse,
Yevyng the prince suche exortac*i*on
As to his highnesse he coude best devyse.
Of trouth, peace, of mercy, and of Iustice,
And odir vertuys, sparing for no slouthe
To don his devere, and quiten hym, as trouth

[52]

Required hym, anenste his souereyne,
Most dradde and louyd, whos excellent highnesse
He aduertysede by his writing playne,
To vertue p*er*teynyng to the nobles
Of a prince, and berith wyttenesse
His trety entitlede 'of regyment,'
Compyled of most entier true entent.

[53]

Loketh Also vppon dan Iohn lidgate,
My mastir*e*, whilome clepid monke of bury,
Worthy to be renownede laureate,
I pray to god*e*, in blis his soule be mery,
Synging 'Rex Splendens,' the heuenly 'kery,'
Among the muses ix celestiall,
Afore the hieghest Iubiter of all.

[*Hill's Text.*]

¶ Behold Ocklyf in his transslac*i*on,[1]
In goodly langage & s*en*tence passyng wyse
howe he gewyth his p*ri*nce such exortac*i*on
As to the hyeste he covld best devyse
Off trowth̄ / pees / m*er*cy / & Iustyse,
& vertu, lettyng for no slowth
To do his devoyre & qvyte hy*m* his trowth.

¶ Requyre hy*m* As Agaynst his soverayn*e*,
moste Drade & loved, whose excellent hyenes
he advertysed by his wrytyng playn*e*
To vertu ap*er*teynyng to nobles

[1 transflac*i*on]

[51]

Beholde Ocklyf in his translacion — Read Occlevetoo,
In goodly langage / & sentence passyng wyse
How he gyueth his prynce / suche exortacion — 353 who gave his Prince such wise advice
As to the hyest / he coude best deuyse
Of trouthe. pees. mercy. and Iustise
And vertues / leetyng for no slouthe
To do his deuoir & quite him of his trouthe — 357

[52]

Requirede hym / as ayenst his souerayne — [Leaf 9 *b*.]
Most drade & louyde / wos excellent hyeues
He aduertysede / by his wrytynge playne — 360
To vertu / apperteynyng to nobles
Of a prynce / as bereth goode witnes
His traytye / entitlede of regymente — in his treatise *De Regimine Principum*.
Compylede of entyer trewe entente — 364

[53]

Loke also / vpon dan Iohn lydgate — John Lydgate, too, my master.
My maister whylome / monke of berye
Worthy to be renomede / as poete laureate — 367
I praye to gode in blysse his soule be mercy — (I pray God his soul is singing *Rex splendens*
Syngynge Rex splendens that heuenly kyrye
Amonge the muses nyne celestyalle
Byfore the hyest Iubyter of alle — 371

[*Hill's Text.*]

Off a *prince*, as beryth̄ god wytnes,
hys treatye entytled of regemente,
364 Compyled of entyer trewe entente.

¶ Loke also than vpon Iohan lydgate,
My mayrster, whylom monke of bury,
worthy to be renomed As poete lavreate;
368 I pray to god in blysse his sowle be mery,
Syngyng / Rex splendens / *that* hevenly Kyrye,
Amonge *the* mvses nyne celestyalł
be-fore *the* hyghest Iubyter of alł,

[54]

I not why deth my mastire dide envie,
But for he shulde chaunge his habite;
Pety hit is that suche a man shulde die!
But nowe I trist he be a carmylite;
His amyse blacke is chaunged into white,
Among the muses ix celestiall,
Afore the hieghest Iubiter of all;

[55]

Passing the muses all of elicone,
Where is ynympariable of Armonye,
Thedir I trist my mastir-is soule is gone,
The sterrede palays aboue dapplede skye,
Ther to syng 'sanctus' incessantly
Among the muses ix celestiall,
Affore the highest Iubiter of all.

[56]

Redith is volumes that ben so large and wyde,
Souereynly sitte in sadnesse of sentence,
Elumynede wyth colouris fresshe on euery syde,
Hit passith my wytte, I haue no eloquence
To yeue hym lawde aftir his excellence,
For I dare say he lefte hym not on lyue,
That coude his cunnyng suffisantly discreue.

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372 [Omitted. See Preface, p. ii.] [*Hill's Text.*]

376

¶ Passyng the mvses nyne of elycon,
380 Wher ys no pareyll of Armonye;
Thyder I trust my Maysters sowle be gon,
The sterred paleys above the dappled skye,

[54]

[Omitted. See Preface, p. ii.]

374

378

[55]

Passynge the muses nyne of Elycoñ
Where is non pareyl of armonye
Thider I truste my meistres soule begone 381 in the starred palace above the dappled sky, before the
The sterride paleys / aboue the dapplyd skye
There to synge sanctus incessantly
Amonge the muses ix celestyalle
Byfore the hyest / Iubiter of alle 385 highest Jupiter of all.)

[56]

Redeth his volumes / that ben large & wyde [Leaf 10 a.]
Seueryly set / in sadnes of sentence Read his large volumes
Enlumyned with colours fressh on euery side 388
Me lacketh witte / I haue none eloquence illuminated with fresh colours.
To gyue hym lawde / after his excellence
For I dar saye / he lefte hym not a lyue
That coude his connyng / sufficiently discriue 392

Ther to syng sanctus insessavntly *Hill's Text.*]
384 Emonge the mvses nyne celestyall,
Before the hyeste Iubyter of all.

¶ Redyth hys volumes that be large & wyde,
Severyly sette in sadnes of sentence,
388 Enlumined with colovres fresshe on euery side. [ffl C lxiiij.]
Me lakketh wytt, I haue non eloquence,
To geve hym lawde after his excellence,
ffor I dare saye he lefte hym not alyve
392 That covde his cunyng ssufficiently discryve.

[57]

But his werkys his laude moste nede conquere,
He may neuer oute of remembrance die,
His werkys shall his [name [1]] conuey and bere
Aboute the world all-most eternallie;
Lette his owne werkys prayse hym and magnifie;
I dare not preyse, for fere that I offende,
My lewde langage shuld rather appeyre than amend.

[1] MS. *here repeats* werkys.

[58]

Lo, my childe, thes good faders Auñcient
Repide the feldis fresshe of fulsumnesse,
The floures feyre they gadderid vp and hent,
Of siluereus langage the tresoure and richesse;
Who wolle hit haue, my litle childe, doutelesse
Must of hem begge, ther is no more to say,
For of oure toung they were bothe locke and key.

[59]

There can no man there fames nowe disteyne,
Thanbawmede toung and aureate sentence,
Men gette hit nowe by cantelmele, and gleyne
Here and there wyth besy diligence,
And fayne wolde riche the crafte of eloquence;
But be the glaynes is hit often sene,
In whois feldis they glayned haue and bene.

[Hill's Text.]

¶ But his werkes his lavde must nede conquere;
thei may never owt of remembravnce dye;
hys werkes shall his name conveye & bere
Abowte *the* world almoste eternelly.
lete his owne werk*is* pr*a*yse hym, & magnyfye;
I dare not pr*a*yse, leest for fere I offende;
My langage shuld rathere apayere than amend.

¶ Loo, my child, this faders avncyente
Repen *the* fyldes ffresshe of fulsomnes;
the flowres fresshe thei gadered vp, & hente.
Off syluer langage *the* greate ryches

[57]

But his werkis / his laude / must nede conquere
They may neuer / out of remembraunce dye
His werkis shal his name conueye & bere
Aboute the worlde / almost eternely
Lete his owen werkis preyse hym & magnefie
I dar not preyse / for fere lest I offende
My langage / shold rather apeyre than amende

His works
shall bear his name about the world almost eternally.

[58]

Loo my childe / these faders auncyente
Repen the feldes fresshe of fulsomnes
The flours fresh they gadred vp & hente
Of siluer langage / the grete riches
Who wil it haue my lityl childe doutles
Muste of hem begge / ther is no more to saye
For of our tunge / they were both lok & kaye

[Leaf 10 b.]
These ancient fathers reaped the fields,
and gathered the flowers.
He who wants silver words must beg of them.

[59]

Ther can nomañ now her werkis disteyne
The enbamed tunge / and aureate sentence
Men gete it now / by cantelmele & gleyne
Here and there by besy diligence
And fayne wold reche / her craft of eloquence
And by the gleyne / it is ful oft sene
In whos felde / the gleyners haue bene

Now we only glean,
and by the gleaning one sees in whose fields the gleaners have been.

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404 who wiłł yt haue, my child, dowtles [*Hill's Text.*]
Muste of *them* bege: there ys no more to saye,
ffor of owre tonge *thei* were both loke & keye;

¶ Ther *can* no man *ther* werkes dysteyne:
408 The enbamed tonge & avreat sentence,
Men gete yt now by *cantelmele*, & glene
here & there by besy delygence,
& fayne wold reche *ther* crafte of eloqvence;
412 & by *the* gleyne ytt ys fułł ofte sene
In whose fylde the gleners haue bene.

[60]

As vnto me Age hath bede good morowe,
I am not able clenly for to gleyne,
Nature is feyne of crafte here eien to borowe,
Me fayleth clerenesse of myn eien tweyne;
Begge I may, I can no gleyn certeyn,
Ther-for that werke I wolle playnly remytte
To folke yong, more persaunt clere of wytte.

[61]

And syke also, and in case ye fynde
Suche gleynes fresch as hath some apparence
Of fayre langage, yet take them and vnbynde,
And preueth what they beth in existence,
Coloured in langage, savory in sentence,
And dou[te]th not, my childe, wythoute drede,
Hit woll profite such thyng to se and rede.

[62]

Yit eft-sonnys, my childe, let vs resorte
To the intente of oure fyrst matiere
Digresside, somwhat fulle we wolld reporte,
And reuyue the lawde of them that were
Founders of oure langage, thilke fadyrs dere,
Who-is soulis god [aboue] in b[l]esse inhaunce
That lusten so oure langage to Avaunce.

[Hill's Text.]

¶ And vnto my age bot good morowe
I am not able clerly for to gleyne,
Nature ys fayne of crafte her eyen to borow;
Me lakketh clernes of myne eyen twayne;
Begge I may / gleyne I may not certeyne;
*ther*fore *that* werke I will playnly remytte
To folk*is* yong, more passyng clere of wyte.

¶ Seche ye *ther*fore, & in caas ye fynde
suche glenars fresshe as haue su*m* apparens
Off fayer lan*g*age, yet take the*m*, & vnbynde,
& preve ye what *thei* be *in* existence

[60]

And vnto me / age hath bode good morowe
I am not able clenly / for to gleyne — I cannot glean,
Nature is fayn̄ of craft / her eyen to borowe
Me lacketh clerenes / of myn eyen tweyne
Begge I maye / gleyne I can not certeyne — I can only beg:
Therfore þ^t^ werck / I wil playnly remytte — gleaning I give
To folkis yong / more passyng clere of witte — up to younger folks.

[61]

Seche ye therfore / and in caas ye fynde — If you find such gleaners,
Such gleynors fressh as haue som̄ apparence
Of fayr langage / yet take hem & vnbynde — unbind their sheaves:
And preue ye / what they be in existence
Colourd in langage / sauerly in sentence — their fair speech
And doubte not my childe / withoute drede
It wil prouffite to see suche thingis & red[e][1] — will profit you.

[62]

Yet eft sones my childe / lete vs resorte — [Leaf 11 a.] But let us return to our first subject.
To thentente of yur first matere
Degressed somwhat / for we wold reporte
And reuiue the laude of hem that were
Famous in our langage / these faders dere
Whos sowles in blysse / god eternel auaunce
That lysten so our langage to enhaunce

[1] A hole in the paper.

Colovred *in* langage, saverly *in* sentence, — [*Hill's Text.*]
& dowte not, my child, *with*-owt drede
yt wiłł *pro*fet to se such th*yngis*, & rede.

¶ Ye, efte-soones, my child, let vs resorte
To *the* yntent of yo*ur* fyrst matere
Degressed somwhat, for we wolde reporte
& revyue *the* lawde of th*em that* were
famovs *in* owre langage, thise faders dere
whos[1] sowles *in* blis, god et*er*nałł avaunce, — [1] The *s* is by a later hand.
that lysten sone owre langage to enhavnce!

[63]

Than, litle childe, I councelle you that ye
Take hede vnto the norture that men vse,
Newe founden or Auncient whet[h]er hit be,
So shall no man youre curteyse refuse;
The guise and custome shall you, my childe, excuse;
Mennys werkys haue often entirchaunge,
That nowe is norture, sumtyme had ben full straunge.

[64]

Thinges whilome vside ben layde aside,
And new fetis dayly ben contryvyde,
Men[nys actes] can in no plight abyde,
They ben chaungeable and oft mevide,
Thing some-tyme alowide is nowe reprevide,
And aftir this shall thingis vppe aryse,
That men sette nowe but [at] litle a prise.

[65]

Thus mene I, my childe, that ye shull vse and haunte
The guise of them that don most manerly,
But be ware of vnthrefte ruskyn galaunte,
Counterfetoure vncunnyng of curtesie,
His tecches ben infecte wyth vilonye,
Vngerde, vnblesside, seruyng at the table,
Me semeth hym seruaunt full pendable.

¶ Then litiłł Iohn̄, I consayle you *that* ye [*Hill's Text.*]
Take hede to *the* nortvres *that* men vse, [ffl C lxiiij back.]
newe fownd or avncyent, whe*ther* yt be;
So shałł no man your curtesye refuse;
the gyse & custum, my child, shałł you excuse.
Menys werkes haue oftyn enterchavnce;
that nowys norture, somtyme hath be stravnge;

¶ Thyng*is* whylom vsed be now layd a-syde,
& newe fetes dayly be contryved:
Menys actes can in no plyte abyde,
They be chavngable & ofte meved;

[63]

Thenne lityl Iohn / I counceyl you that ye — Little Jack,
Take hede to the norture / that men vse — take heed to the
Newe founde / or auncyent whether it be — manners of your time,
So shal no man / your curtoisye refuse
The guyse & custom / my child shal you excuse
Mennys werkis / haue often enterchange — for customs change,
That nowe is norture / somtyme had be strange

[64]

Thingis whilom vsed / ben now leyd a syde
And newe feetis / dayly ben contreuide — new ways are invented every
Mennys actes / can in no plyte abyde — day,
They be changeable ande ofte meuide
Thingis somtyme alowed / is now repreuid
And after this / shal thinges vp aryse — and will be hereafter.
That men set now / but at lytyl pryse

[65]

This mene I my childe / þt ye shal haunte — [Leaf 11 b.]
The guyse of them / that do most manerly — Imitate the well-mannered, and
But beware of vnthryft Ruskyn galante — beware of ruskyn gallants
Counterfeter of vnconnyng curtoisye
His tacchis ben enfecte with vilonye — of bad habits,
Vngyrte. vnblyssed. seruyng atte table — serving ungirt,
Me semeth hym a seruant nothing able

[*Hill's Text.*]

thynges sumtyme alowed be now repreved ;
& after this shall thynges vp a-ryse
that men sett now but at lytill pryse :

¶ This mene I, my child, that ye shall havnte
the gyse of them that do most manerly ;
but be ware of onthryft [1] ruskyn gallavnte,
Conterfetter [2] of vnconnyng curtessy,
hys taches ben enfecte with vylonye ;
Vngerte / vnblessed / servyng at table,
Me semeth hym a servavnte no thyng able ;

1 A later hand has added *y*.
2 The *r* is by a later hand.

[66]

Wynter ne somer to his souerayne
Chappron hardy no bonet lust avale,
For euery worde yeuyng his maister tweyne,
Vaunparlere in euery mannes tale,
Absolon wyth the disculede heres smalle;
Lyke to A presener of seint Malouse,
A sonny bush myght cause hym to goo louse.

[67]

O I passe norture! fy! fy! for schame!
I shuld haue seide he myght go hauke and hunt,
For that schuld be A gentilmannys game,
To suche disportis thes gentis folkys be wounte;
I seide to ferre, my langage was to blounte,
But of this galaunte, loo! loke a while & fele,
He feccheth his compace whan he shall bowe or knele,

[68]

Braced so straytly th[at h]e [1] may not plie,
But gaderith hit in by maner of wyndlese,
And ȝif he wrenche aside or lytil wrye,
His gere stonte all in pertous [2] case,
The scho, the hose, the point, doublet, and lace;
And if ought breke, somme thinges [3] that ben badde
Shall sey anon, 'a knaue hath broke a ladde.'

[1] MS. the.

[2] *Read* perlous?

[3] *Read* tounges.

[*Hill's Text.*]

¶ Wynter & somer to his soverayne
Capron hardy, no bonet lyst to avayle,
For euery worde geveyng his mayster twayne,
avavntparler In euery manys tale,
Absolon with disheveld heres smale,
lyke to a prysoner of saynt malowes,
A sonny busshe able to the galowes.

¶ O! I passe nortvre! fy, fy, for sham!
I myght haue said he shuld go havke & honte,
ffor that shuld be a gentylman[i]s game,
To suche dysportis gentill folkis be wonte;

[66]

Wynter and somer to his souereyne
Capron hardy / no bonet lyste to auale — not doffing his cap to his master,
For euery word / gyuing his maister tweyne 458
Auauntparler / in euery mannys tale — forward in speech,
Absolon with disheueld heeris smale — rough-haired,
Lyke to a prysoner of seynt malowis — and lousy-headed,
A sonny busshe / able to go to the galowis 462

[67]

O I passe norture fy fy for shame — (though it's hardly good manners to say so.)
I myght haue said he shold go hauke & honte
For that shold be a gentilmans game 465
To such disportes / gentil folkes be wonte
I sayd to ferre / my langage was to blonte
But yet sir galante whan ye shal bowe or knele — When he tries to kneel, he works
He goth by compace round as doth a whele 469 round like a wheel,

[68]

Braced so strayt / that he may not plye — [Leaf 12 a.]
But gaderith it / by maner of a wyndelas — being braced so tight that he
And he ought wrenche a syde / or a litil wrie 472 can't bend. If he twists, a
His geer stondeth thenne / in ful parlous caas — lace is like to crack.
His sho / his hose / doblet / point & laas
And yf ought breke / somme tunges þt be bade
Wil mocke & saie / a knaue hath broke a lad 476

[*Hill's Text.*]

1 sayd to ferre, my langage was but blonte ;
468 but yet, sir gallavnt, whan ye shall bowe or knele
he goth by compasse rovnd as doth a whele.

¶ Brased so streyte þat he may not plye,
but gaderyth yt by manere of a wyndlas ;
472 & he awght wrench a-side, or a litill wrye,
hys gere stondyth them *in* full parlovs caas,
hys sho // his hose / doblet, poynt & laas ;
& yff owght breke, sum tonges *that* be bade
476 will moke & say, "A knave hath broke a lade."

[69]

Lat galaunte go, I mene, recheles ruskyn ;
Take hede, my childe, to suche as ben cunnyng,
So shall ye wyrship best conquere and wynne,
Enforsith you in all youre demenyng
To sewe vertu, and[1] from foly declynyng ;
And, my childe, that ye loue of honeste,
Which is accordyng wyth humanyte.

[70]

That is, to you to vndirstond And knowe,
That youre aray be manerly and resonable,
Not appeissh knawen[2] and to mowe,
I[n] nyse aray that is not couenable,
Fetis founde be folkys vnprofitable,
That maketh this worlde so pleynly transformate,
That men semen almost effeminate.

[71]

Pley not Iakke mAlaperte, that is to sey,
Be ware of presumpcioun, be ware of pride,
Take not the fyrst place, my childe, be no way,
Till odir be sette manerly abyde,
Presomcion is often sette asyde,
And Avalith f[r]om his highe[3] de-gre,
And he sette vppe that hath humanite.

[1] *Omit* and.

[2] *Sic.*

[3] MS. hight.

¶ Lete gallant go ! I mene, recheles ruskyn : [*Hill's Text.*]
Take hede my child to suche as be connyng,
so shall ye best worship conqvere & wynne ;
Enforce you *in* all *your* demenyng
To folowe vertu, & fro foly declynnyng ;
& weyte well *that* ye love honeste
which ys accordyng vnto humanyte.

¶ That ys for you to vnd*er*stond & knowe,
that your araye be manerly resonable,
Not apysshe vnto moke ne to mowe ;
To nyce araye *that* ys not commendable,

[Ihū 1503 per Richard hill || fil C lxv]

[69]

Lete galante go / I mene recheles ruskyñ
Take hede my chyld to suche as be connyng
So shal ye best worship conquere & wynne
Enforce you in al your demenynge
To folowe vertu / & fro folye declynynge
And waite wel that ye loue honeste
Whiche is acordynge [1] vnto humanyte

Let Reckless Ruskyn go! You follow skilful men, virtue and honesty.

[70]

That is for you / to vnderstonde & knowe
That your araye / be manerly resonable
Not apysshe / on to mocken ne to mowe
To nyce araye / that is not commendable
Fetis newe founden [2] by foolis vnprouffitable
That make þe world so plainly transformate
That men semen almoste enfemynate

[Leaf 12 b.] Don't dress apishly or foppishly.

[71]

Playe not Iack malapert / that is to saye
Beware of presumpcion / beware of pryde [3]
Take not þe first place my child by the waye
Tyl other be sette / right manerly abyde
Presumptuous ben often set a syde.
Ande alleday aualyde / as men may see
And he is sette vp / that hath humylyte

Don't play Jack Malapert, that is, don't be presumptuous. Wait till others are seated.

[1] *Orig.* accrdynge. [2] *Orig.* fonuden. [3] *Orig.* pryte.

---

488 ffetys, newe fonden by foolis vnprofytable, that make the worlde so playnly transformate that men semen Almost enfemynate. [*Hill's Text.*]

¶ Playe not Iacke maleperte, that ys to say,
492 be ware of presumpcion, be ware of pryde;
take not the first place, my child, by the waye;
tiłł oder be sette, ryght manerly a-byde,
presumtvous be ofte sette a-syde
496 & alł day avaled, as men may see,
& he ys sette vp that hath humylyte.

[72]

To [1] cunnyng persones regarde ye take,
Where ye be sette in right atentif wyse,
Connyng folke cunnyng folke shulde make,
To theire goodnesse ye shalle make youre summise,
And as thei do, ye mosten deuyse;
For this, my childe, is as the gospell treue,
Whoo wolle be cunnyng muste the cunnyng sewe.

[1] MS. The.

[73]

And o thing I charge you speciall[ie],
To womanhode good kepe you take alway,
And them to serue loke that ye haue an eie,
Ther comaundementis, my childe, loke ye obey,
Plesaunt wordis to them I warne you saye,
And in all wyse do youre dilligence,
To do them plesure, honoure, and reuerence.

[74]

As at this tyme this tretice shall suffice,
Disposeth you to kepe in youre mynde
The doctrines whiche for you I deuyse,
And douteth not, fulle welle ye shall hit fynde;
To youre honoure enrolle hit vp and bynde
Ryght in youre brest, and in youre ryper age
I shall wryten you here-of the surplusage.

[*Hill's Text.*]

¶ To connyng persones regarde ye take,
wher ye be sette, right in ententyf wyse;
Connyng folke connyng men shall make;
to *ther* connyng ye shall make your surmyse,
& as *thei* do, ye must your selfe devyse;
ffor this, my child, ys as *the* gospell trewe,
'who will be connyng, he must connyng sewe.'

¶ And on thyng I warne you specyally:
to womanhede take awe alway,
& them to serve loke ye haue an eye,
& *ther* comavndment*is that* ye obeye;

[72]

To connynde persoñs regarde ye take — Watch knowing folk, and
Where ye be sette / right in ententyf wyse
Connyng folk / connyng men shal make
To their connyng ye shal make your surmise — their skill,
And as they do / ye muste your self deuyse
For this my childe / is as the gospel trewe
Who wil be connyng / he must þe connyng sewe

[73]

And one thing / I warne you specyally — Specially attend to women, and
To womanhede / take awe alweye
And them to serue / loke ye haue an eye
And theire commandementis that ye obeye
Plesant wordes I auyse you to them seye — speak pleasant words to them.
And in alle wyse / do ye your diligence
To do them plesure / and reuerence

[74]

And at this tyme this tretye shal suffise — This is enough for the present.
Dispose you / to kepe it in your mynde — Mind you attend to it,
The doctrine whiche for you I deuyse
And doubteth not / ful wel ye shal it finde
To your honour / enrolle it vp and bynde
Right in your breste / and at your riper age — and when you're older I'll write you the rest.
I shal wryte to you / herof the surplusage

Plesaunt wordis I avyse you to them saye, — [*Hill's Text.*]
& in all wyse do ye your delygence
To do them plesyre and reverence.

¶ And at this tyme this treatise shall suffice;
Do pose you to kepe it in your mynde,
the doctryne which for you I devyse;
& dowteth not, full well ye shall yt fynde
To your honowre; enrolle yt vp & bynde
Right in your brest, & at your ryper age
I shall write you here-of the surplusage.

[75]

Goo, litle childe, and who doth you Appose,
Seying, youre quaire kepeth non accordaunce,
Tell [hym], as yite neyther of ryme ne prose
Ye be experte; pray hym of sufferaunce;
Childer must be of childly gouernaunce,
And they must also entredet [1] be
Wyth esy thyng, [and not] of subtilte.

[1] *Read* entreted.

[76]

Youre lytil quaier sum*m*itteth euery where
To corecc*i*on and beneuolence,
But where enuie is, loke hit come not there,
For eny thing kepith youre trety thense;
Enuie is full of frowarde reprehense,
And howe to hurte liethe eu*e*re in awayte,
Kepeth youre quaiere, that hit be not her baite.

EXPLICIT.

DOMINE, SALUUM FAC REGEM.

[*Hill's Text.*]

¶ Go, litiłł Iohn̄, & who doth you oppose,
sayenge yo*u*r quayre, kepeth no*n* accordavnce;
Telł hy*m* as ȝet neythere *in* ryme ne p*ro*se
ye ben exp*er*te; p*ra*y hy*m* of suffraunce.
Chyldren [1] muste be of childy gou*er*navnce,
& also *thei* muste entreted be
W*ith* easy thynge, & not w*ith* subtilte.

[1] MS. Clyldren.

[75]

Go lytyl Iohn / and who doth you appose
Sayng your quayer / kepe non accordance
Telle hym as yet / neyther in ryme ne prose
Ye ben expert / praye hym of suffrance
Chyldren muste be / of chyldly gouernance
And also they muste entretyde be
With esy thing / and not with subtylte

Whoever questions you, say you are not yet up in rime or prose.

[76]

Go lytil quayer / submytte you euery where
Vnder correction of benyuolence
And where enuye is / loke ye come not there
For ony thinge / kepe your tretye thens
Enuye is ful of froward reprehens
And how to hurte / lyeth euer in a wayte
Kepe your quayer / that it be not ther bayte

Little book, I submit you to correction: but go not where envy is.

Explicit the book of curtesye.

¶ Go, lytill quayer, submyte you euery where
vnder correccion of benevolence;
& wher envy ys, loke you cum not there,
ffor any thyng kepe your treatye thens;
Envye ys full of froward reprehens,
& how to hurte lyeth ever in a-wayte;
kepe your quayre that yt be not ther bayte.

[*Hill's Text.*]

Here endyth A lytyll treatyse
called the boke of curtesy or litill Iohan.

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H. stands for Hill's MS. at the bottom of the pages, O. for the Oriel MS. on the even pages. Cot. is for Cotgrave's Dictionary.

Absolom with dissheveled hair, l. 460.

Amyse, l. 376, amice. Fr. *amict*, an Amict or Amice, part of a massing priest's habit. Cot. From L. *amicire*, to throw round; *am* and *jacere*. Mahn.

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> We may bi oure law examyne hym fyrst . . .
> . . let me *oppose* hym . . .
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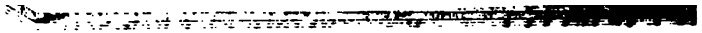

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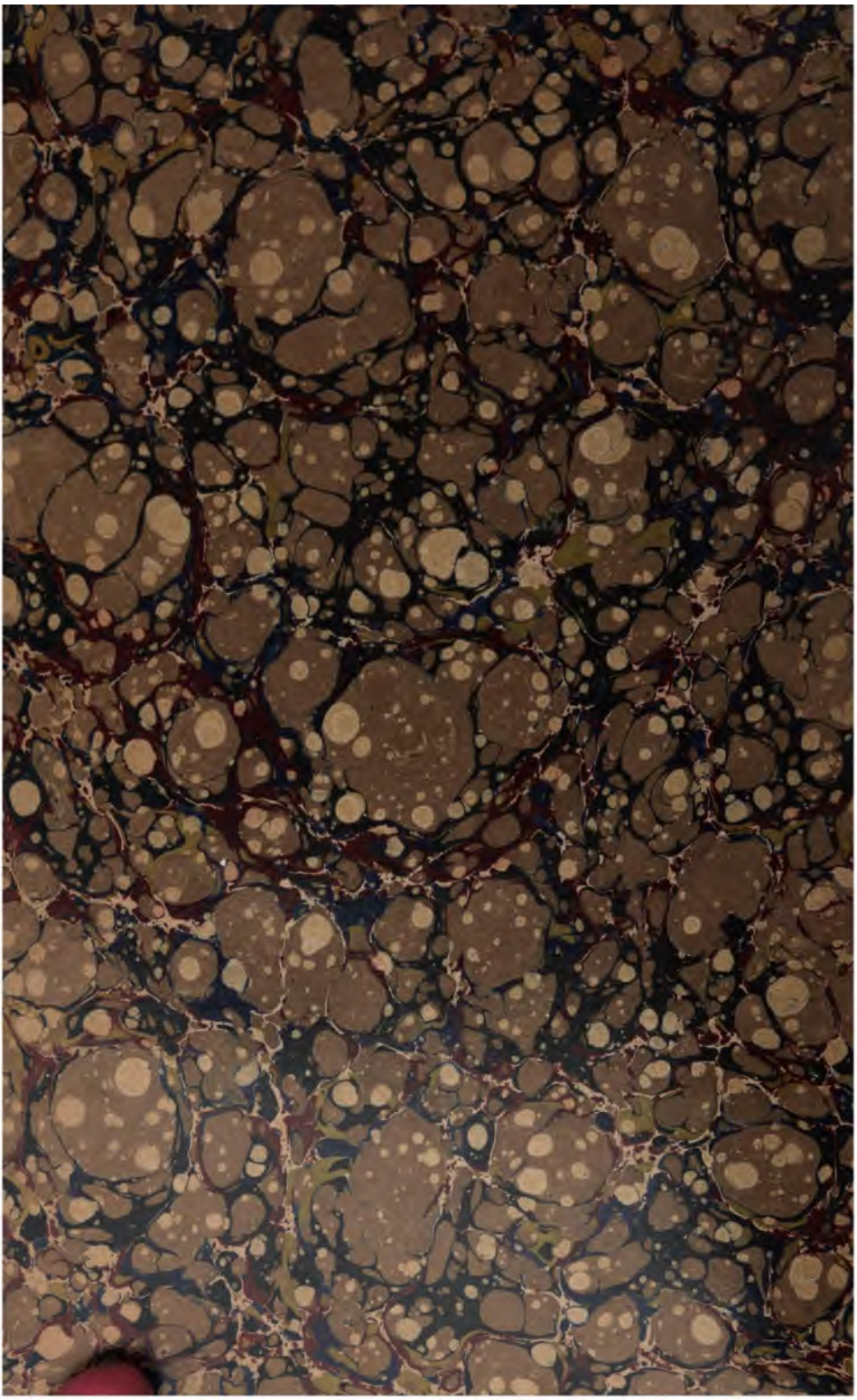

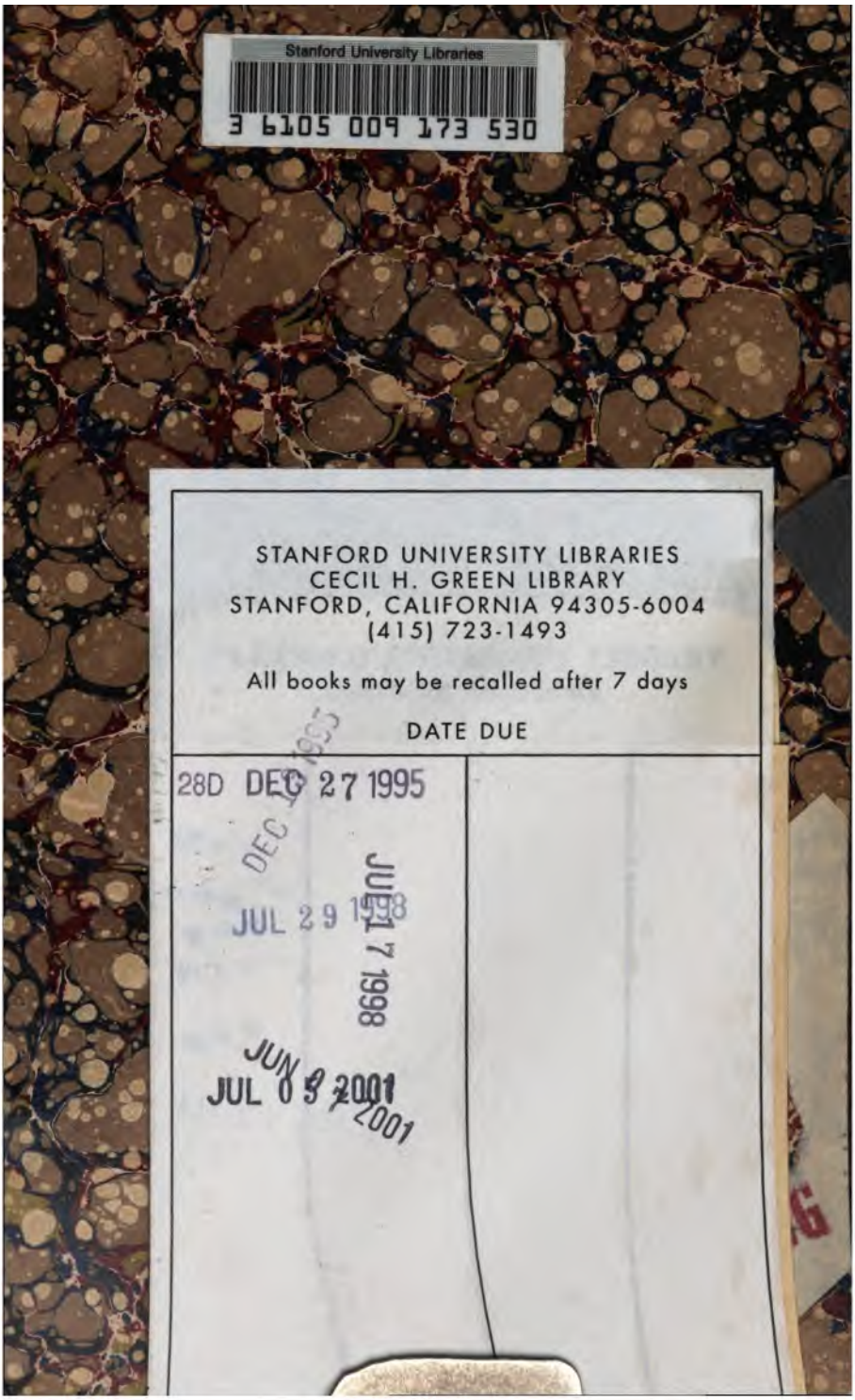

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